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1877

REV WILLIAM BURNARD, A.M.

TO A SERMON

ON THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

OF CHRISTIANITY

THOMAS WILLS, A.B.

Minister of the Gospel Church, and Vicar of Margaret Ward,
Oxford.

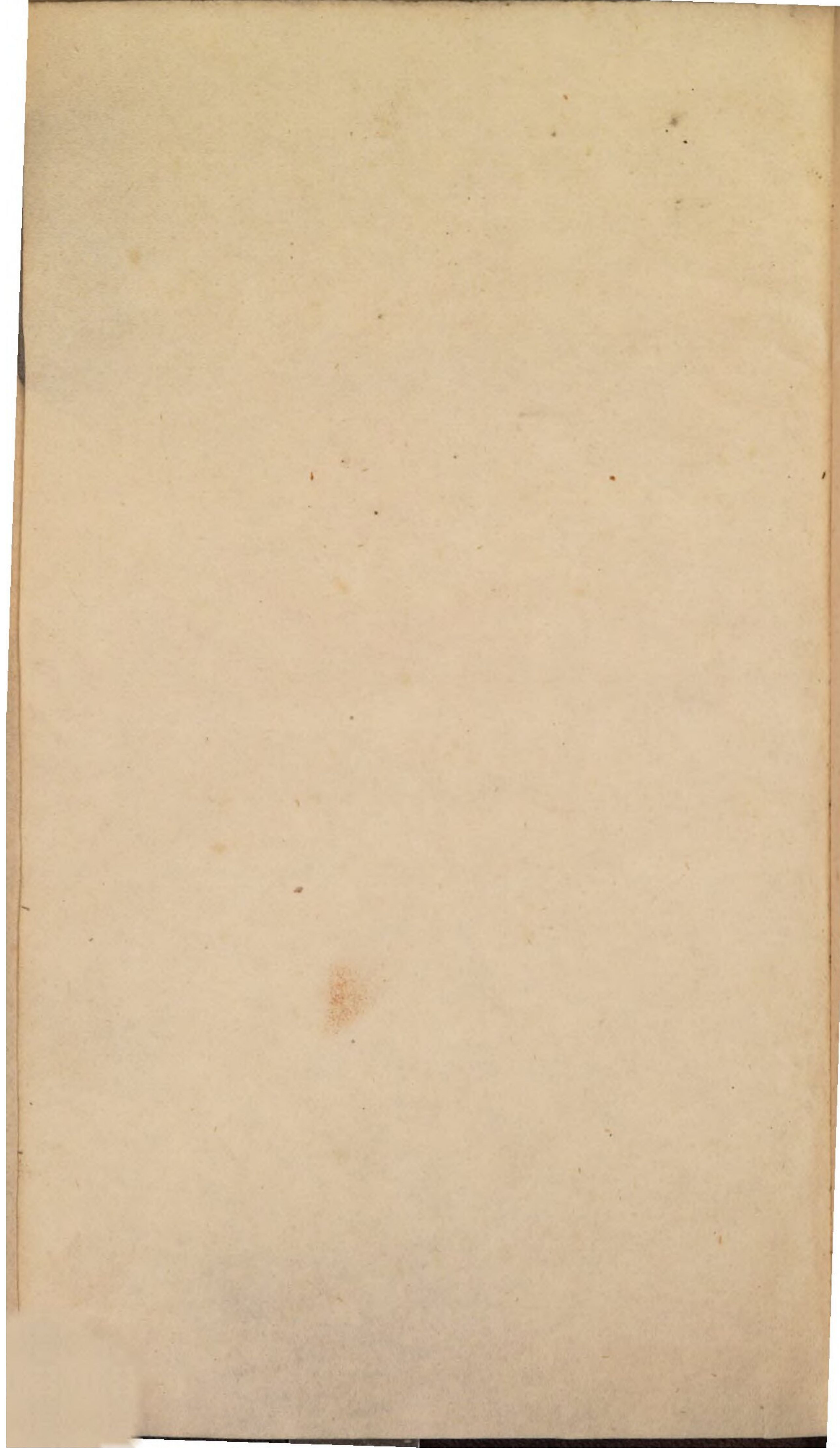
His Father's name is not forgotten. 1877.
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FIRST EDITION.

LONDON:

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1877.



LETTERS

FROM THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM ROMAINE, A.M.

*Rector of St. Andrew Wardrobe and St. Anne, Blackfriars,
and Lecturer of St. Dunstan's in the West,*

TO A FRIEND,

ON

THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

DURING

A Correspondence of Twenty Years.

PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS,

BY

THOMAS WILLS, A.B.

Minister of Silver Street Chapel, and formerly of Magdalen Hall,
Oxford.

His Letters are weighty and powerful.

2 Cor. x. 10.

CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.

Col. iii. 11.

Fifth Edition.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR SMITH AND ELDER,
FENCHURCH STREET.

1822.

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LETTERS

FROM THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM BOMALINE, A.M.

MINISTER OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH IN THE CITY OF LONDON,
AND FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

TO A FRIEND.

ON

THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

OF

A CHRISTIAN'S DUTY IN THE PRESENT AGE.

REVISED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.

BY

THOMAS WILKS, A.B.

MINISTER OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH IN THE CITY OF LONDON,
AND FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

His Epistles are weighty and powerful.
Christ is all, and in all.

With additions.

LONDON.

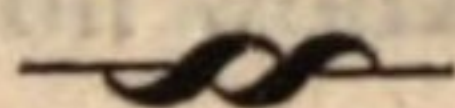
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Maurice, Fenchurch Street.

1821.

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PREFACE.



THE following Letters, it is presumed, need no confirmation of their authenticity, nor any recommendation of their invaluable contents, to those who knew and esteemed their late excellent Author. The manner and style, almost peculiar to himself, of making CHRIST the All in All, in the glory of his person, the efficacy of his blood and righteousness, and the fulness of his salvation, proclaim aloud these were written by no other than Mr. ROMAINE: they prove also, to a demonstration, that Jesus was his darling theme, in his closet as well as the pulpit, in his private correspondence as in his public discourses; nor,

indeed, was this holy man of God ever in his element but when he was making mention of his divine Master's name and righteousness only, of which it might be literally said he knew no end.

The Editor pledges himself to the public, that these Letters are faithfully printed from the originals in the handwriting of their venerable Author; and he flatters himself he is bringing glory to his adorable Lord, as well as rendering an essential service to the Church, by preserving this invaluable treasure from oblivion, which God in his providence hath thus put into his hands, he trusts, for this very purpose, and is not to be found in any other publication. Nor will his prayers be wanting,—that every reader of this precious collection may, by the Divine blessing, reap the greatest benefit from its perusal, and have

cause to glorify the Great Head of the Church, who had so abundantly blessed this incomparable minister's labours *in his life*, for accompanying with the unction of the Spirit these his *posthumous* Letters, by which, though dead, he yet speaketh.

Finally, he humbly hopes that, as the deceased blessed Author of these epistles had treated the religious world frequently with various other Treatises and Sermons, the novelty of this little work, sanctioned too by its own intrinsic excellence, will still render it doubly acceptable to the Church of God; especially as every thing is omitted of a personal nature respecting the friend to whom these Letters were immediately addressed; and what is here published is presumed to be of equal concern to every other individual believer.

For their service, therefore, and with this view, is this mite humbly cast into the Lord's Treasury by a willing, though unworthy, servant of Christ,

THE EDITOR.

LETTERS.



LETTER I.

Dec. 28, 1762.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I do not forget you nor your last favour. Till memory fail me, I hope, in a grateful mind, to retain a sweet sense of your kindness to me. Blessed be his name! I have a desire put into my heart by my heavenly lover to spread his fame and glory as far as my tongue can reach: and for what else do I take up my pen but to make mention of HIM, even of HIM ONLY? the favourite theme of his redeemed on earth—the tri-

umph of the same redeemed, when they come to Sion with everlasting joy upon their heads and in their hearts. My meditation of him is now sweet ; in one single point of view I am beholding him, and in that he is glorious. O that the faithful witness for him may give you to feel what I have felt of his incarnate love! May the Spirit glorify in your soul that greatest, that standing miracle of Jehovah's everlasting grace, by letting you know, that *for* you a child was born, *for* you a son was given, even Immanuel himself—God *with* us, and God *for* us. I will try to lead you, by the light of revelation, into some of the wonders of this transaction, as they have been manifested with life and power unto my own heart.

The scripture is a full description of the purposes of the divine will from eternity to eternity. Therein we find a council held, before all worlds, between the Holy Trinity, and the decrees of this council confirmed by the covenant and oath of each of the divine persons. This was the great

contrivance of heaven, and it lay in the bosom of Jehovah with infinite delight. He viewed it as the richest display of all his divine perfections, in which, and for which, his glory would be admired and enjoyed by his creatures for ever and for ever. Immanuel was the centre of this covenant—his becoming surety for his people—taking flesh for them—living and dying, that the divine honours of the holiness, and truth, and justice of the Godhead might shine forth in full-robed glory, for shewing mercy to poor sinners.—This was, this is, this will be the eternal subject of praise. Hear how the Father triumphs in the Son of his love—*Behold my servant, whom I uphold—mine elect, in whom my SOUL delighteth.* And again, with a voice from heaven, *This is my BELOVED Son, in whom I am well pleased.* All the councils, decrees, and works of Jehovah terminate, yea begin and end, in this blessed Immanuel; and therefore, when the angels were created, the purpose of Jehovah's taking flesh was manifested

to them; and proclamation was made—*Let ALL the angels of God worship him.* Pride arose in the heart of Lucifer and his companions: their will opposed the will of the eternal Three in this matter, for which they were cast out of heaven, and have opposed Christ and his people ever since.

Then this world was created for the carrying into execution the purposes of the everlasting covenant. Man, the object of the Deity's delight, as made in the image of God—part of two worlds—a body of earth, an immortal spirit—by the one connected to matter and sense, by the other to God, the father of spirits. The enemy of Jesus attacked Eve, and beguiled her through his subtlety. Adam was not deceived, but fell by listening to his material and sensual part. He preferred his wife to God, and so lost his image, knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

Upon this the revelation of the covenant was made, and the incarnation of Jehovah was made known as the ground of

faith and hope, and of return again to God in the way of love and gratitude.—As clear as words can speak, and signs declare, the promised seed of the woman was to attack Satan, and was to bruise his head, where the poison lies, and thereby to deliver his people. For this purpose the Father sent him into the world, that he might deliver us from the power of darkness, and translate us into the kingdom of his dear Son. I believe, from the evidence of Scripture, that Adam, and all believers downwards, had as clear a view of the incarnation of Jehovah, and of the reasons for his taking flesh, as you and I have ; and, with as warm hearts as we *can*, have they rejoiced in the God of their salvation. Hear one of them, how he stands amazed at this miracle of mercy,—*But will God, indeed, dwell with men on the earth?* And mind the pious breathings of his holy father—how he longed for Christmas ! *O that the salvation was come unto Israel out of Sion ! O that the Lord would deliver his people out of captivity !*

Then shall Jacob rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. That he would COME, was the ground of hope to all believers in every age; and there were many of them waiting when he came, who blessed God for letting them see with their eyes his great salvation. At the fixed moment, when the fulness of time was come, there was a chosen vessel most graciously fitted and humbled for this miraculous conception. She was highly favoured, high in grace, meek, and lowly in heart; and of her, by the power of the Holy Ghost, was that holy child conceived—of her, the virgin mother, was he born—a babe, helpless as we are. Here is *Love!* O what a miracle—God incarnate! And yet like us in all things—*an infant.* Be astonished, ye heavens! and adore, thou earth! this miracle of miracles!

He is born among us, grows up as we do; a child, a youth, a man—true and very man. But, O the rapturous thought! he is Jehovah. Think, O think what that blessed woman felt when she broke out

into this sweet hymn—*My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, MY SAVIOUR.* There's my honour—not that he is my son, but that he is God, MY SAVIOUR. He took my nature, that I might take his : he lived for me, that by his obedience I might be made righteous : he suffered my punishment, that I might never suffer it : he bore my curse, to redeem me from the curse of the law : he was forsaken of God his father, that I might never be forsaken : he died to give me life : he rose again, to take possession of life for me : he ascended in our nature, and is glorified in it. What he has, I shall have : his honours, his crown and dignity, his fulness of joy and bliss—all, all are mine : what he is, what he was, is for me : for he is God, MY Saviour. Happy, thrice happy Mary, virgin mother ! Yea, happy, thrice happy, too, Mrs. ——. Is not the new-born king your king ? Is not the child Jesus your God ? He is, he is ; you cannot deny it. O come, then, my dear friend, let us praise his precious name,

and let us magnify his love together. Soon, yet a very little while, and we shall be with him; we shall be *like* him. O what a thought is that, LIKE HIM! Yes, when we come where he is, the glory of that sun of righteousness will shine upon us, yea, will shine into us; and he will make us what he is. We shall then be happy partakers of all that was with delight in the breast of Jehovah from eternity; all will be fulfilled. The Father's richest love, the most exalted grace of the Spirit, will flow, through the infinitely blessed Immanuel, into all his glorified members. This is the accomplishment of the everlasting covenant. In this the eternal Three will take eternal delight. Jehovah will rest in his love. And through that God-man will the Godhead have full, perfect, and everlasting glory, honour, worship, blessing, and praise, from the full choir. You will sing aloud, in as high a key as any one of them all. Complain now you may, and of yourself you *ought*; but then it will be ALL praise—all wonder

—that *you* should be chosen, elect of God, partaker of his covenant-love, this distinguishing grace will make you a happy, willing debtor to Immanuel for ever and ever.

Thus, looking backward or forward, I see all the purposes and works of God bearing respect to this wonderful person. He was set up from everlasting as the Alpha, and he will be to everlasting the Omega; for in all things he must have the pre-eminence. He has it above. O that we may ascribe more of it to him below: and you will, if you can pierce with the eagle eye of faith within the veil. There you will behold Immanuel enthroned, and all the host of heaven worshipping at his feet, admiring and adoring, because sharing in, his divine excellencies. The beauty of this sight makes an eternal heaven. Then, if your faith has any ears to hear, listen. O what melody do they make!—what notes do these golden harps strike!—what voices accompany them!—what a harmony! The words I under-

stand—they are singing *Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever.* But their manner of singing is peculiar to the place. The air can form no such sounds: they can be only in the element of heaven. When your faith comes down from this high flight, and it is not capable of being long there, then look around you; and whatever object your eyes first fix upon, if they be spiritually exercised, you will see some ray of our Immanuel's glory. The book of nature is the outward record of his fame. Some of his great achievements are engraved in every part of the creation.—The sun, moon, and stars, the earth with all its productions, in full concert join the choir above, and in perfect unison sound forth the glory of our Immanuel. And suppose I direct your eye to an object which I know you do not like to look at—YOURSELF. Even there I can find, O that you may, as great a proof of the Redeemer's glory as any where else upon earth: for, what are you? Are you not a poor, mi-

serable, helpless sinner?—His crown depends upon his saving such. What do you feel within you? — tell all your complaints. These just fit you to live upon the Saviour's fulness. Look at your outward estate; tell me that part of it which does not display the Saviour's glory. What does fortune say, and health and friends? (I put myself in)—let me be their mouth:—*We are all the gifts of Jesus's rich love—love him for bestowing us upon you; and the more you have, love him more.* And, mind, you cannot, you never will, love him too much. Try—put forth all your strength—he will still be above your affection, the best, the utmost of it. I wish you much of his company this Christmas—many a sweet visit from him. When you are very familiar, put a word in for me. O how I long to be more intimate with him. But he is kind, indeed; exceedingly kind. Dearest, dearest Jesus!—May he never leave you without some token of his love! —Paper fails—Farewell. W. R.

LETTER II.

Lambeth, Jan. 18, 1763.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I OFTEN remember you in the best place, and for the best purposes, but cannot bring myself to love writing of letters, yet I have again taken up my pen, to wish you every spiritual blessing purchased by the life and death of our incarnate God, and that will make you as happy as you can be on this side of heaven. In this new year, may you grow in the knowledge and excellency of his most adored person, of his complete finished salvation, and of your own particular interest in it; and, having these believing views, may you glorify him by living happy upon his fullness! I know a little of these matters, and but little; yet I am sitting, abashed at my

ignorance, at my Master's feet. He has made me willing to hear his words; and I find his lips so full of grace, that I cannot spare a moment for my Homer or Virgil, my favourite Tully or Demosthenes. Adieu for ever to all the classics. I see an heavenly life, as well as a matchless beauty, in my Lord's words; and though I am a dull scholar, yet he is a blessed master. He keeps me waiting upon him day by day, trusting nothing to my own understanding, but listening continually to his instruction: so he gets all the glory of making me wise unto salvation. To this great prophet may you repair for instruction all this year! He teaches as never man taught. His doctrine is with power and demonstration of the Spirit. He can so humble your pride, that you shall be as dependent upon him as a new-born babe; and then, having emptied you of your own carnal reason, and false wisdom, he will enlighten you by his word and spirit, with saving truth. Here the humblest scholar learns the most; for our highest lesson is to learn how to live

upon him, who was made of God unto us wisdom ; and he who relies most upon him for that wisdom will certainly be the wisest. If the whole world was mine, and I could purchase what I would with it, I would give it all to be a scholar made poor in spirit at Christ's feet. And what, then, can I wish my dear friend better, than to be one of his little children, whom he teaches his mind and will ? Only I could wish you more humbled, that you may more perfectly learn the two blessed truths which he is exalted to teach his people ; namely, to believe in his blood and righteousness, and to live upon his grace and power.

His prophetic office is to teach us how to be always *safe* by believing in him, and always *happy* by living upon him. He has the residue of the Spirit with him, and he sends him into the believer's heart, to be always preaching this most comfortable doctrine, that whatever he wants for his acceptance at the bar of justice, it is perfectly to be had, and freely in the fulness

of the Lord Christ. Sins as red as scarlet, sins as numerous as the stars, or as the sand upon the sea-shore innumerable, and nature as black as hell, a heart as wicked as the Devil, the divine and eternally precious blood of Jesus can so cleanse and purify, that not one spot shall remain : for he is Almighty. He has all power in heaven and earth to pardon sin. If I had been guilty of all the sins of Adam and Eve, and of all their descendants to this day, yet believing in him I should be safe, because his blood cleanseth from all sin. And in Christ the believer has a better righteousness than that of the angels ; theirs is finite, his is infinite :—a better righteousness than that of our first parents in paradise ; theirs was the righteousness of a creature, and they lost it ; this is the righteousness of God, and it is an everlasting righteousness, never to be lost. It is the righteousness in which the saints stand before God for ever and ever. When the holy Spirit takes of these things of Christ, and preaches them to the heart,

oh, what a sweet peace follows!—for the believer then finds himself saved from all the miseries of sin, and entitled to all the blessings of eternal glory; and, being thus persuaded of his safety, by believing in the atoning blood of our Great High Priest, then the Holy Spirit teaches him how to live upon Christ, and how to make use of Christ's fulness. On our learning this lesson depends our comfortable walk heaven-wards: for Christ does not give us a stock of grace, and expect us to improve it by being faithful to grace given: no, no; that is not his way. Our souls must depend upon him, as our bodies do upon the elements of this world. Every moment we must live by faith upon his fulness, and be every moment receiving out of it grace for grace. And this is our happiness—to have all in Christ. A beggar in myself, but rich with unsearchable eternal riches in him. Ignorant still in myself, but led and taught by his unerring wisdom. A sinner still, but believing in his blood and righteousness. Weak and

helpless still, but kept by his Almighty love. Nothing but sorrow in myself, nothing but joy in him. Oh ! this is a blessed life. No tongue can tell what a heaven it is, thus to live by faith upon the Son of God. Thanks be to him, I know a little of it ; and I cannot but heartily pray that you may know more of it this year than you ever did. Surely I could not have thought, some years ago, that there was such an heaven upon earth as I now find—Blessings for ever on the Lamb ! May you find it more and more ! Sweet Jesus keep you, my dear friend !

Your's,

W. R.

LETTER III.

Lambeth, March 26, 1763.

THANKS to my dear friend for her kind letter this morning. The subject inquired after, is what I have been long exercised about, both in my own soul, and in my ministry; and, for the sake of weak believers, and to save myself great trouble in continually conversing with these persons, I resolved to write a little treatise upon the subject. I trust my time and strength, what I have and am, is now the Lord's. I wish he may use me as he pleases, for his own glory. My writings are to set forth his praise, and to exalt his salvation. The inclosed plan will shew you what I propose; and, to make it more easy to be understood, I shall relate it by way of experience, giving an account of *the Life*

of Faith, as it was begun in one of my acquaintance, and carried on to this day, he being now a father in Christ; and I shall make remarks upon it as I go on. The subject is but little known. I pray you, my dear friend, forget not me, nor my book. Beg of the Lord Christ to bless it. If he smile upon it, it will be useful to his people: that is my highest wish. May it be profitable and useful to your soul!

I have many letters to write to-night, and yet I could not help acknowledging the receipt of your's. To a precious Jesus I commend you: to his love and to his power leave all your matters. What *cannot*, what *will* not he do for you, if you do but trust him! Are they not all happy in heaven? It is his happiness. They have it from him. Trust him, and he will not only bring you safe there, but also make you happy by the way. Oh! what a savor is there in his name! I did but just mention him, and I can scarce stop my pen, his love so warms my heart. Dear precious Jesus! thou art above all blessing

and praise ; fill my friend's heart with thy love, and make her rejoice in thy finished salvation. My kind respects to Miss —— ; and pray tell her she cannot possibly think too highly of Christ, nor love him too much, nor live too much by faith upon him. His salvation is infinite and eternal: the love of him for this salvation is heaven upon earth ; and living by faith upon him, for the present graces and future glories of this salvation, is getting every moment fresh tokens of his love to us, and exciting fresh love to him. In short, I wish she may be married to Christ, and then, his person being her's, his honours, his estate, and all he has, will be her's also. Once more, to that dearest of all names, JESUS, I commend you ; and am your's unfeignedly, for his sake, W. R.

LETTER IV.

Lambeth, May 14, 1763.

BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed you with so many blessings already, and who having begun will not cease to bless you in life and death, and for evermore! Your letter of May 2d puts me in mind of his goodness, as I wish all things may. It rejoices my very heart to see him displaying the glories of his grace far and wide. From London through Europe, from Europe to America, yea, as far as the sun travels, his fame is spread. And does he not deserve it? Oh, my friend, what have we to tell of, but the loving-kindness of Jesus; and what to praise, but his wonders in saving such as we are, and in saving so many of us? Blessings for ever on the Lamb!

May we glorify him by resting on him for righteousness and strength, and by living wholly upon him for grace and glory. Then all goes well, when

On all besides his precious blood,
On all besides the son of God,
We trample boldly, and disclaim
All other saviours but the LAMB.

As to what you write about, I know not what to say. It is in the best hands. He knows what to do. Let him alone. Remember he is the head of the church, and he will look after his own matters, and well too. At present I see not my way clearly from London. Here my master fixes me, and here I must stay till he call me to some other place. When he would have me to move, he will let me know his will. Besides, what am I? What does it signify where I am? A poor dumb dog, the vilest, the basest, of all the servants of my Lord. If you could see what is pass-

ing for any one hour in my heart, you would not think any thing of me; you would only admire and extol the riches of Jesus's love. Wonderful it is that he should set his heart upon such a very incarnate devil, and humble me so as to make me willing to be saved by his sovereign grace; and that he should send such an one to preach his gospel, and bless it too to many, many souls (while every sermon covers me with shame and confusion)—oh, this is wonderful, wonderful, eternally to be admired, grace! What cannot he do, who can form a preacher out of such a dry rotten stick, fit for nothing but the fire of hell? Glory, glory be to him alone, and for ever, and for evermore. All the tongues, in heaven and in earth, men and angels, throughout eternity, cannot praise him enough for what he has already done for my soul, and therefore I am content to be a poor broken bankrupt debtor for ever. Hereby I shall be enabled for ever to exalt him, and to put the crown upon his head, and that is all I want. It will be

heaven enough to join that blessed company, who are crying, *Worthy is the Lamb* (but none else) *to receive blessing and glory, &c.* Nothing is mentioned among them but Jesus's goodness, and he does not leave himself without witness among us poor sinners. He has been doing miracles of mercy for Lady H.; and as she herself says, *In the midst of judgement he remembered mercy.* You have heard, I suppose, of Lady S——'s illness. She had a violent fever for about seventeen days, and the physicians did not apprehend she was in any great danger, although she was near her end. On Thursday morning, about four o'clock, the Lord took her to himself. O what a stroke was that, say you, to Lady H——; No, indeed, it was all mercy, all love, like the rest of Jesus's gracious dealings with his people. During her illness, Lady H—— had every day many promises given her of God's kindness to her daughter; all which she interpreted in a carnal sense, like the Jews, and thought her daughter would re-

cover, and do well again. By this means she was wonderfully supported, and her spirits were kept up to the last. And when the Lord let her see things were otherwise intended than she thought, then he had prepared for her a fresh fund of comfort. For such was Lady S—'s behaviour, and such her speeches, from the beginning of her illness, that there is no doubt but she died happy in the arms of Jesus. My dear friend, if I had time to tell you all the particulars of her death, your soul would abundantly rejoice, and all that is within you would bless the God of your salvation. To him she committed herself, trusted him, found him faithful, and declared, over and over again, that in him she was happy. Her last words to her mother, when she took her leave, were these: Lady H— had said, "My dearest child, how do you feel your heart? are you happy?"—She answered, lifting up her head from the pillow, which she had not done for several days, *I am happy, exceedingly happy in Jesus*—then she kissed Lady H—,

and presently went home. Although my lady bears this loss so well, yet she feels it. She is but a woman, and though a gracious one, yet grace does not destroy nature. She is a parent, and at present incapable of writing. I am your's in Jesus,
W. R.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I CANNOT resist the opportunity, though I can write but two or three lines, to thank you for your last letter, and for your kindness to me expressed in it. I thank God for the contents. What you say of yourself is to me very comfortable, because I see how the Spirit of God is leading you. He is taking you up into the highest form in the school of Christ, and is teaching you an experience which is not only next to glory, but is also glory begun. This being the hardest to learn, no wonder you should complain. I take notice of your account of your present state, of your trials, and of the exercises of your faith. A great part of your letter is upon these points, describing your

self-abasement and loathing at the sight and sense of what you are in yourself, and wondering that such an one as you should be brought to know, to believe in, and to love our Jesus.

Now, my good friend, I must tell you, if you had written to me, and desired me to give you the character of a true Christian, I should have copied it from your letter. I could not have left one circumstance out. All that you mention of your being tried, afflicted in body and mind, brought low, and kept low; sometimes mourning at the strength of corruption, and at the weakness of your graces; at your love to earthly relations, and at your love to our Jesus—one so strong, the other so weak; your trials on these, and many other such like accounts, are such as no true disciple of Christ, in your circumstances, could be without. My answer should have been, *He is exactly what Mrs. — says she is.* For in reading the scripture I can find but these two things spoken of the office of the Holy

Spirit: He first enables the sinner to receive Christ by faith; and then to live upon him, so received, for all things. If you examine these two rules carefully, you will see that all the teaching of the Holy Spirit may be reduced to them; and if you examine yourself by the light of the word, you will have no doubt but that you are among them to whom the promise was made; all thy children shall be taught of God. For, have you not renounced your righteousness as well as your sins? Have you no more dependance on your good works than on your bad works? Is not the holy nature of our Immanuel, his infinitely holy life, his everlastingly precious death—is not this complete work of his the only ground of your hope? O yes, say you, “on this rock I lay my foundation, I build all on it for time and for eternity.” Very well! then certain it is, the Holy Spirit has done his first work in you. He has enabled you to receive Christ; now he is carrying on his work, the second part of the same lesson,

which is enabling you to live upon Christ received. This is very hard to learn; it's against nature; against our natural love for law and works, our legal lookings at self, our foolish hope, if I live longer I shall be better. O it is hard, I find it to this hour, like leaping over-board in a storm, to cast myself simply on Jesus for every thing; but it must be done. The Spirit abides with you for this purpose—that he may take of the things of Christ, and shew them to you, and so glorify him. When he is teaching this heavenly truth, we kick against it, we pervert it. When we go on the best, we think we are at the worst. But he abides, to conquer our opposition, to set right what we pervert, and to convince us all is and shall be well. May he thus bless a word spoken to the Saviour's glory!

My dear friend, you know it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell in our Jesus: it pleases the Spirit to witness of it, and to glorify it. How? in what way?—why, just as he is teaching

you. He is bringing you to live out of yourself upon the fulness of Jesus. Mind how he does it. He shews you, first, that you want such a thing; then, that you cannot get it any where but from Jesus; and then he leads you to think, that, trusting to his faithful word, you may experience how ready his heart, how able his hand, is to supply all your need. This is a beggar's life; here's nothing but alms. We don't like it. We want some stock; if we could get it, we should like an independent fortune. But it cannot be. The Spirit of Jesus will witness of nothing, and glorify nothing but the Saviour's all sufficient grace; and therefore he sets himself against all our greatness and goodness—that he who glorieth may glory only in the Lord Christ. And when he is bringing us to this true glorifying of the Lord, we mistake, we pervert his lessons; I know I do, and I think you do. We both fail in our experience, as your letter clearly proves to me.

If you ask me, how you may become a better scholar? as I have been taught, I would gladly inform you.

Read and pray for more SELF KNOWLEDGE: God's word and Spirit will teach you nothing about yourself, but what will humble you to the dust, and keep you there. Read and pray for more knowledge of Jesus, of his person God-man—his salvation-work infinitely and everlastingly perfect: he is your's, now he is received, and all he has, and all he is, as JESUS, your's in title, and, so far as you believe, your's now in possession.

Read and pray for more FAITH, that what you have a title to, you may take possession of, and so make constant use of it. Your estate is great, immensely great. Use it, and live up to it: as you do in temporals so do in spirituals. Your money, your land, your air, your light, your meat, and drink, and house and clothing, these you use: but you have not them *in* you; only, being your's, they are used *by* you. So do by Christ. When

the Spirit would glorify Jesus, he humbles you. When he would glorify his fulness, he makes you feel your emptiness. When he would bring you to rely on his strength, he convinces you of your weakness. When he would magnify the comforts of Jesus, he makes you sensible of your misery. When he would fix your heart on his heaven, he makes you feel your deserved hell. When he would exalt his righteousness, you find you are a poor miserable sinner. Can you, my friend, practise this? let nothing keep you from Jesus. Whatever you need, whatever you feel wrong, may it bring you to the Saviour's fulness! O that all things may help forward your acquaintance with him! I except nothing, neither sin nor sorrow: I would carry all to him as one great lump of sin, and receive all good from him, as the only storehouse of good for wretched sinners. In this communion I desire to grow; for this I desire to live. O that you and I may learn it more, and get every day nearer fellowship with our sweet Jesus

—growing up into him in all things.

See how my pen runs on as fast as I can write. My very heart and soul are enamored with him : I love his name ; I adore his person : he is my heaven. O what treasures are there in our Jesus ! May his glorious Spirit witness for him to your heart. Believe me your very sincere friend, a well-wisher in that matchless lover of sinners, and of one of the chief of them.

W. R.

LETTER VI.

Brighthelmstone, Sept. 1, 1763.

I HAVE at last got a spare hour to write to my dear friends at ———, and to tell them how much I wish all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus may be their's. Since I left you, all has been hurry, travelling from place to place, till kind Providence has brought me to Brighthelmstone, where I hope for a little rest—not so much to my soul; blessed be the grace of sweet Jesus, I have that—but rest from distraction, hurry, dust, heat, and want of sleep. This is a kind of heaven after a storm. Not that I expect a continual calm here: it would be a sad place indeed, if there were no enemies, no warfare, no trials and troubles in it. These I must have wherever I go; because

they grow in my constitution, and are nourished in the body of sin; and because without them I should not know how to prize Christ. But I find my retired and private times are the best for my own soul, as more public times are for others: and yet that sweetest blessed Jesus, when I am in his work, takes care of me; and when I am watering others, he does not leave me unwatered myself. I am a witness for him. I have been preaching of his salvation many years in the midst of a crowd, living all the time in a great hurry; and yet I gain every year some fresh knowledge of myself, some more knowledge of my incarnate God, and some steadier trust and dependance upon him; and I can say it is good for me that I have been a poor despised preacher of Christ Jesus.

Now, what can I wish my dear friend more for her peace and blessedness, than that the dear Saviour may do for her what he has done for me, only in a greater degree? for I am sure it is a growing thing. In the knowledge of ourselves we may cer-

tainly increase. There is a mystery of iniquity in us, which we shall not perfectly comprehend so long as we live. But as we make fresh discoveries of it, we shall see our want more of Christ, and thereby get more knowledge of the great mystery of godliness. The sense of our manifold wants will magnify the riches of his grace in supplying them. So, the lower man is abased, the higher is the Saviour exalted. And this will of course bring us to make more use of him, to trust him more, and to live more upon him, which is the blessedness of faith. When I feel the depth of my distress and wants, and the infinite riches of Jesus's grace to supply them, then faith does its office aright, when it is not discouraged by a sense of many increasing wants, but is thereby made to cleave closer to Jesus, and to prize him more. This is my present state; and in it I have at times a pleasure which cannot be described. The height of Jesus's grace is so exactly suited to the depth of my distress, that I am ready to glory in it, I

would not be without one single want. My wants are my happiness. They make Christ so exceedingly desirable, that fresh wants add to him in my eyes fresh beauty. It is a pleasure to be in his debt—yea, the greatest I know of. I would not have inherent righteousness, if I could get it for nothing. I would not be rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing from him, if it was possible. His glory is my heart's delight; and therefore I love to glorify him, by living upon his fulness. I, nothing—He, ALL in ALL. When it is thus with me, I am safe and happy. I am the greatest fool that ever lived—I feel it! and that makes his wisdom so precious. I am the chief of sinners—I find it daily; and that makes his blood and righteousness my continual delight. I have as many evil tempers as the devil: Oh! how they stir, and fight against the Spirit! But Jesus is my sanctification. He has given them their death's wound; and by and by they will expire, and be no more. In myself I deserve hell every moment; but Jesus is my

redemption, my eternal redemption. Oh! how my heart loves him! He knows it well. And if I am ever vouchsafed (why should I doubt it?) to see him face to face, I will acknowledge him to be ALL in ALL, and rejoice to acknowledge it for ever. And it will be the very heaven of heavens (truly I taste something of heaven in thinking of it) to give him the glory of my crown, and to lay it low at his feet.—WORTHY IS THE LAMB. Thanks be to him, I can sing this song now, but in a poor strain to what I hope to do soon. Sweet Jesus, bring you and me safe to the eternal enjoyment of him and his glory.

I am sorry to stop, to tell you of two parcels I left at ———, one for you, and another for Mr. ———. I hope they are come safe to hand. Inclosed in your's was a Field's Bible, the best present I could think of for your kindness to me, and another little pocket Bible for dear ———. One favour would I beg, if you would grant it me; and that is, for you both to read the Bible over once in these little keepsakes.

I have many reasons for asking this favor ;
 but one is peculiar to myself, namely, that
 it will often put you in mind of your faith-
 ful friend in the bond of the Spirit,

W. R.

LETTER VII.

Brighthelmstone, Sept. 26, 1763.

THE presence of dear Jesus be with my dear friend—that presence which turns darkness into light, sin into righteousness, misery into heaven. What can you want, if he be with you? He has such a miraculous virtue, that he can turn your weakness into strength, your mourning into joy, your death into life; so that there is not in you any evil effect of sin, but his almighty grace can make it work under him for his glory, and for your good. Oh! may this presence be with you as long as you are in this state of weakness, and mourning, and death. Sweet Jesus keep you; nay, I know he will. His tender, loving heart loves to the end. Oh, my friend, what a Saviour is he! Oh, how I love him! He knows I do; and yet I am ashamed to

think how far below his deserts. By-and-by I shall do better, when you and I meet before his throne; then, then—But—I stop.

Would ——— be worthy my acceptance?
The worth of it does not come before me, but what my Master expects of me. His will must be my rule; and it has been a long time as plain to me as that two and two make four. I am stationed by myself. I am alone in London; and while he keeps me there, I dare not move; as, when he has a mind to remove me, my way will be as plain from London as it is now to abide in it. If I hearkened to self, and wanted to run away from the cross, I know of no place so snug as ———; but would you have me such a coward as to fly, and such an one to stand by me—one who has kept me in many battles, and one who, I trust, will presently make me more than conqueror?

I have not time to answer your letter in other points. Only be assured of my prayers (such as they are) for your reading the Bible. Remember again, Christ is the

sum and substance of it all. May his Spirit breathe upon it as you read, and lead you beyond the letter to the life-giving sense!

I have great faith about ——. You *will* be taken care of: do not doubt it. The government is on Christ's shoulders, and he does all things well. Leave it to him. But he does use means; therefore pray write as soon as you have fixed on a proper person. My kind love to dear Mr. ——. I wish him as happy as my Master can make him, and then he will be one of the happiest men in this world. Our friends with you have my hearty good wishes for their better acquaintance with the precious Lord Jesus, and more faith to get more out of his fullness. To him I commend you all, and your present case at ——; and am, with my wife's respects, for his sake, your faithful friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER VIII.

Lambeth, April 17, 1764.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE just now received your letter, and thank you for the kindness you express in it to me. I am pretty well in health, and loaded with benefits—nothing but mercy, rich mercy every day. All the dealings of my most precious Jesus with my soul are grace and love: He not only promises, and by faith makes me rely upon him for heaven, but now, even now, I am as it were in heaven; for I live upon his heavenly blessings. Vile and base as I am, yet he lets me approach him, and converse with him freely. He vouchsafes to admit me into fellowship with him; and he opens his treasures, and says, “All these are thine; I bought them for thee with the price of my blood, but I

give them to thee as a free gift. Take this for the earnest—accept this for the pledge of all the rest; and all mine are thine.”—Yes, Lord, I believe it: on thy word do I trust, and I rely upon thy faithfulness to make it good to me. I desire to glorify thee amidst all my wants, and sins, and miseries, by living out of myself upon thine infinite fulness. Empty me still more, blessed Lord! be daily emptying me more, that I may be capable of holding more of thy good things. What do you think of this? is it not heaven begun? What is heaven, but the perfection of this life of grace? Believers now live with Christ: they now live upon Christ. Christ is their ALL; for the life which they now live in the flesh, they live by the faith of the Son of God: and what a blessed life this is I have in some small degree experienced; and what the Lord has taught me I have endeavoured to set forth, and make public, for his glory, and the comfort of weak believers. The little book is finished. May my ever dear Jesus shine upon every page as you

read it, and strengthen your faith, and warm your heart with his heavenly love! I beg your prayers for a blessing on this book: I beseech you do not forget it, for your own sakes and mine, and all the household of faith. To Jesus's love I commend you and Mr. —; and am, by many ties, your servant in the gospel,

W. R.

LETTER IX.

July 3, 1764.

I HAVE my dear friend's letter of the 19th of June by me, and thank you for it. You may be sure I am glad to hear the little book agrees with what God has taught you; not glad for the author's sake, but for Christ's sake, and for your's—*For Christ's sake*, because I live, and preach, and write, to exalt that royal Saviour: oh! how my heart longs to see him crowned in your soul, when you will go forth as the command is, and see king Solomon with the crown of grace and glory on his head, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart; then all within you will gladly bow to his sceptre—And *for your sake*, because he is begun to be crown-

ed, since you say you have experienced some of the things in this little book. I wish I may help you, God helping me, to experience more of the glorious majesty of our King of kings, when I come down and preach at ————— upon that text; and when I am setting forth that sovereign Prince and Saviour, may his Spirit then crown him in your conscience, and enthrone him in your heart. But I cannot come the day you mention, because it is my last Sunday at St. Dunstan's; and the week after I go down to Brighthelmstone, and shall be there for a fortnight, and then set out for your place.

Till that time come, I shall be wishing you, what I am always desiring for myself, a stronger sense and clearer feeling of my wants, and more faith to live upon Jesus for the supply of them. When you have nothing in yourself to be pleased with, all wretchedness and helplessness, then should Jesus be most precious—he being the Almighty Saviour of such a wretched helpless creature. A man that has a plentiful

table thinks it a happiness that he sits down hungry and thirsty—so should you, when every thing within you is saying—“Here you can do nothing—there you can do nothing, *without Christ*.”—Then faith should say, It is true, I cannot; but he has in him that very thing which I want, and he has promised to give it me, and on him I depend for it. Such a dependence is heaven upon earth. I find it so: nor would I have it otherwise. What would become of me, if I was rich and encreased with goods, and found no need of any thing? Why, then, I should not feel my want of Christ; I could not live upon him, and so should become comfortless. My dear friend, believe me, I have been trying all ways to happiness, but all have failed me, till this one—and here I am settled. I want nothing but Christ. People tell me, I must submit to this ordinance, and be joined to such a church, and come under church discipline, and must be dipped, &c. &c. I have Christ—I want no more—This is making Christ of him. And this

saves us from ten thousand thousand snares and troubles in life. I assure you, it has brought me such peace, as I scarce thought it possible to have in this world. Excuse me, then, when I wish you poorer and poorer every day, that you may be richer in Christ. I shall not cease to remember you as above, till you hear farther from your's in that most sweet and lovely Christ, the fairest, yea, the very beauty itself, of all the fair. Oh! how I love him, and he loves a poor wretch.

W. R.

LETTER X.

Hartlepool, Aug. 7, 1764.

I RECEIVED my dear friend's letter, and think she overlooks our ever adorable Jesus, in setting any value upon a poor, dirty worm. If his grace raise it from a dung-hill, and set it upon a throne with his princes, who shall have the glory,—the worm, or Jesus? Shall any of his due praise be given to it? God forbid! There ought to be an holy jealousy in you and me, that we rob not our God of his glory. If we do rob him of ever so little, he will wither all our comforts and graces; but if we give him all the glory, which we cannot do, unless he be ALL, and we be nothing; then every thing will go well with us. We get exalted as we are humbled. The lowest is

the highest; which makes me fear to look at any good in myself, unless the kind hand which gave it me be seen at the same time; and afraid to hear of any thing good in myself, unless I am sure my MASTER has all the praise. The plan upon which I act, herein, is this: long experience and many humblings have brought me to it. I have grieved to see how much of my time ran to waste, partly for want of knowing what to do, and partly through perplexity about what was done, lest it was not done aright; and therefore I was led to endeavour to bring the business of every day into a little compass, that, at one view, I might satisfy myself whether I had answered the end of living another day.

There is no doubt left about my belonging to Christ; so that this matter is not to be brought into court again. It has been tried and determined, and is now a settled point. What have I then to do? What is the work of every day? Why, it is to be living still in a constant dependence upon the Lord Christ, and to be growing every

day in the knowledge and experience of that dependence.

The dependence is thus expressed, THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY HIS FAITH: being justified, or made just, he shall not live by any works, by any stock of grace, by being faithful to any talents received, but he shall live upon the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, receiving from him continually grace for grace.

The believer's growth in this his dependence is thus spoken of: *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God our Saviour.* GRACE is the free love of God to poor sinners in the whole plan of salvation—from first to last, all is of grace; and in the knowledge and experience of this there is a growth. The believer learns more clearly that all is of grace, and that he has no hand in saving himself, but an empty receiving hand. Grace comes to pull him down, and to set Christ up. When the heart is established with grace, the creature is stripped quite bare, without a rag to put on, or money to buy any, or wisdom

to know where to get it. Grace pulls down all high things, levels all distinctions, and leaves the poor creature nothing at all to trust in, or to boast of, but to live upon Christ's alms: so that the sense of our lost, guilty, helpless state, is the only thing which can make us willing to receive a whole Christ, and the abiding sense of this will keep us willing to live upon a whole Christ. And while a believer lives thus, how can he grow in grace, if he be not discovering every day more of the depth of iniquity which is in him? Grace cannot be magnified, unless nature be humbled. Jesus Christ cannot become more precious, unless SELF become more vile. As the believer sinks in his own eyes, Christ rises in his esteem. And this, in my opinion, is growing in grace. Growing in the sense of our weakness, magnifies Christ's strength—our sinfulness his righteousness—our folly his wisdom—our misery his happiness—our outward sorrowful state, his inward peace and joy. Thus the growth in the knowledge of Christ is closely connected

with the knowledge of self. And that makes me afraid of any thing which tends to weaken this view of things ; because it would weaken my dependence upon Christ. I should not see nor feel my want of him so much, which would stop the working of faith, and thereby eclipse the glory of Jesus. You see my jealousy. And indeed I have great reason for it. After all my experience, which you have read in *the Life of Faith*, I have a revolting heart. Still I would turn from and live without Christ, if I could. Pride puts me upon it. Oh, it is the very devil, that pride ; it attacks not the heel, but the heart of Christ, and wants to rob him of his crown—And I have so smarted for it, that the most distant approach is terrible to me. Think what you will of me, but never mention me without mentioning the grace of my dearest Lord, who has made me all that I ever shall be, but sin and misery.

My sweet Jesus hath contrived so much work for me in these parts, and he is so evidently and powerfully with us, that I

cannot leave my neighbours, who crowd to hear far more than ever, and they are to me as my own soul. We are beyond all description happy in our loving lovely Lord. Such meetings I never knew—and twice a day—and many churches open. Oh! that I could but stay—I am so knit in heart to my neighbours, and the most of them come and sit quietly to hear, that I know not how to leave them. But it must be. Adieu, my friend: remember your's in our precious Immanuel,

W. R.

LETTER XI.

Dec. 29, 1764.

ALL the blessings of this good season be with my dear friend. That man, for whom Christ was born, is the greatest, richest prince upon earth—his revenues, his honours, his mighty allies, his everlasting kingdom, are beyond all conception. Compared to what he is, and has, crowns and empires are but play-things for little children. And he comes to all his dignity by Jehovah's taking flesh, through which wonderful event he can be made one spirit with him—He took our flesh that we might take his Spirit—He was born on earth, that we might have a new birth from heaven—He took our sins, that we might take his righteousness—and our miseries, that we might be heirs with him of his happiness. O what an astonishing transaction

is this ! How full of the richest grace, flowing over with everlasting love ! This great and blessed event lay in the breast of Jehovah in eternity. He ever had it in his heart ; it was his beloved plan and purpose that he would take flesh, and display all the glories of his Godhead in the person of Jesus Christ. This was his gracious will and everlasting counsel, to which all his works have tended, and for the executing of which in its full perfection all things are now working together. When the fulness of time was come, O what joy was there in heaven among the angels, who kept their first estate ! They thought it a very high honour to be the messengers of it, even to poor shepherds, with whom they could rejoice, that their God and our God was become incarnate.—BEHOLD, I BRING YOU GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY—glad tidings, indeed ; for they include all the good which Infinite mercy has to give, and the sinner can receive. Hereby light comes to them who are sitting in darkness, and life to them who are in the shadow of death—pardon to

the guilty—comfort to the mourning—liberty to the captives—strength to the helpless—and heaven to the miserable. How blessed a change do they experience, when by faith they know and can say, *Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given!* For this is the saving truth, JESUS IS THE CHRIST, the man is Jehovah, God and man in one Christ, the child born is the mighty God, and the Son given is the everlasting Father—the Virgin's Son is Immanuel, God with us, and her infant babe is her eternal Saviour. Except she had believed this, she could not have been saved, nor can we; and yet it is a truth so far out of the reach of man's understanding, that he could never have thought of it, unless it had been revealed; nor can he now comprehend it, unless he be taught it of God, for no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, is Jehovah, but by the Holy Ghost. Here, then, my dear friend, is matter of thankfulness to you and me, that we are taught this of God. Happy Christmas to us, since we have lived to hear and understand

the great mystery of godliness—GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH. Happier still, that we believe it; for whomsoever the Holy Ghost enlightens with the knowledge of this saving truth, he also gives faith to receive it—to trust in Christ as God—to depend upon him as the Almighty Saviour—to rely upon his finished work—and to lay no other foundation for any grace or glory, but the life and death of this ever-blessed God-man. This is the way in which the Holy Ghost glorifies Jesus. He gives the believer such views of the infinite fullness and everlasting sufficiency of Immanuel, that he is quite satisfied with him. His conscience is brought into sweet peace through the sprinkling of the blood of the Lamb of God; and when guilt would arise, and unbelieving fears disturb, he is enabled through faith in Jesus to maintain his peace: because whatever rendered him hateful to God, he sees it removed by his adorable surety; and whatever God could love him for, he finds himself interested in it through the infinitely precious obedience of the

Lord our righteousness. Thus he enters into the promised rest; thus he maintains himself in it. He can desire nothing, but the Saviour has it; and when he asks, he receives it from him: so that the Saviour more than fills up all his wants—for he satisfies all his wishes; he says, by sweet experience—THIS IS ALL MY SALVATION, AND ALL MY DESIRE.

And what greatly adds still to this happiness is, that it is ever, ever growing—may you and I find it so! As the believer is made to see his absolute safety in Jesus, so does he partake more of his graces and blessings. In hearing and reading the descriptions of the Lord Christ in his divine person, and in his most gracious offices, the Holy Spirit sets in with those descriptions, and presents the inestimably glorious Saviour before the eye of faith with the most attracting loveliness. All the sweets, and beauties, and joys, scattered throughout the universe, are only little drops out of the ocean of Jesus's fulness. There is not any object made to gratify any sense, but the

Holy Spirit shews the believer that very thing in its highest perfection in the infinitely rich Saviour, and gives him a delightful earnest, and by faith a foretaste of it. By which means his whole heart and soul grow entirely in love with that beauty of all beauties, and he says, and it is heaven to feel it, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*

I have more, far more to say, but ——— is waiting. Pray, my dear friend, leave for ever out of your mind and writing—IF I knew—IF I believe—O, why do you doubt? The good Lord keep you and your's. I am, in bonds which cannot be broken, your's in Jesus,

W. R.

LETTER XII.

Feb. 14, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I SHALL be filling up this paper with——. First, Thanking my dear Master for his great kindness to you.—From my heart I praise him—may you and your's give him the whole glory of his temporal and spiritual blessings.

Secondly, I pray him to continue his kindness to you—a thankful temper always has fresh matter for thankfulness. To praise him for the past, is the sure way to secure future mercies. Prayer and praise live and die together.

Thirdly, I tell you of his goodness to me. I am nothing but a miracle of his goodness—the most astonishing that ever was! all, all from my first breath to this I am now

drawing, is mere mercy and grace, and so it will be for ever and ever. My ministry is wonderful, that such a dumb dog should speak—such a very devil in flesh should feel what he says of that eternally precious Jesus, and be the means of making others feel it, and should have no doubt of feeling it blessedly to eternity. O, what delightful views do these things give me of my sweetest Lord and dearest Jesus! He seems willing I should preach more, and have a church in the city; but he will not let it come too easily, lest we should have whereof to glory. We are at law about it, and are like to be a great while, but in the mean time he is doing all things well. The very moment all things are ready, the church will be opened: and if it never is, he does not want me there, with which I am satisfied.

Fourthly, Does all this teach you and me to trust this dear Lamb of God? It should teach us, I hope it does. How safely may we trust his faithfulness; how happily rest upon his almighty love. All things for the

good of soul and body are promised to him that believeth. O, that the Lord may increase your faith and mine! In an hour of need may you find him very, very near to your heart, and filling you with joy and peace in believing.

To Jesus I commend you and your's most heartily, being tied to you in him by the bonds of his everlasting love. Jesus bless you. Amen.

W. R.

LETTER XIII.

May 25, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING an opportunity of sending a note by dear Mr. ———, I could not withhold my pen. What thanks ought we to give to our gracious Lord for his mercies to you! What ought you yourself to give! Can you look back upon any part of your life, especially the last part of it, and is there any thing upon which you cannot write, THIS IS MERCY? O, it is all, from first to last, to them who are chosen, and called, and believe, and live by faith of the Son of God, MERCY—from everlasting to everlasting! A mercy before time, a mercy in time, a mercy beyond time! Where is the fountain-head, the spring of this mercy? In the covenant of the eternal

Three. What gives rise to it? Nothing but the mere grace and free love of the divine persons. A motive cannot rise but in the purpose and breast of God himself. But on whom do the streams of this fountain flow with their quickening, comforting, sanctifying, glorifying streams? On the miserable, and none else; for none else are the objects of mercy. On such as you and me. Mercy has made a rich provision to supply all our wants, to pardon all our sins, to save us from all misery, to entitle us to all glory. And what! is mercy chiefly glorious in reserving all its blessings to another world? the greatest it does, but not all. ALL are now enjoyed in reversion by faith; and all things are working together in Jesus's hands to bring about the full and final enjoyment—that the mercy which is above all the works of God may have for ever and ever all the glory.

So far I wrote on Saturday night, on Mr. — sending me word he should go on Monday

Sunday Morning.

What a mercy does this day call to our remembrance ! The Saviour, risen and ascended, sends down the divine and faithful witness for himself—*He shall testify of me*—bear witness to my person, Jehovah self-existent—my work as perfect as Jehovah could make it. He shall testify of my grace, how free it is, how full it is, and shall enable the sinner, any poor wretch, however vile in his own eyes, to trust his soul in the hands of Jesus. And having enabled the sinner to do this, then he will testify of Jesus, that he has received him, that he is safe in the arms and may be happy in the enjoyment of Jesus's love. Thus he will make the soul enamoured with Jesus ; there will appear such consummate beauty, such infinite loveliness in his precious person, as will eclipse the glory of all other lovers. There will appear such true happiness in fellowship with him, as will quite dethrone the former idols. And when the foolish heart

would depart, he will not let it. Then will he testify of Jesus, “To whom
 “wouldst thou go? Who has eternal life
 “to give, but him? Turn, turn again to
 “thy rest, O my soul.”

If the soul is mourning? He will testify of the joy that is in Jesus. If the soul be burdened? Cast the burden, says he, on thy Lord! If the soul has lost any creature comfort? Let it go, says he; Jesus is still thy salvation, and thy great reward. If the soul be grieved with indwelling sin? It is pardoned, says he; and the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, hath made thee free from the law of sin and of death.

Whatever the wants of the believer are, the Spirit's office is to testify of Jesus, THERE IS THE THING YOU WANT; and to glorify Jesus—THERE YOU HAVE IT FREELY.

My friend, what mercy is this! The Spirit Jehovah abides with you, to testify of Jesus, and his perfect salvation; and to glorify Jesus by enabling you to live safe and blessed upon him, making

him not only ALL, but also ALL in ALL. And when he has taught you thus to glorify Jesus, he will keep you (O, that's sweet!) by his almighty power, till he bring you to the heaven of heavens—the sight and enjoyment of dear Jesus, eternally dear and lovely Jesus.

Is it indeed so? Why, then, commit yourself to this glorious Immanuel. Wait for the Spirit's teaching you all his ways, and shewing you all are well. Remember, he has lent you your chief earthly comfort only just so long as he pleases. When he takes it, hush, not a sigh: *Be still, and know that I am God, a sovereign*—This commands resignation; but the Lamb's voice is all love. I take him away, that you may love me more, and be happier in my love. Let it be so, my dear Lord; be thou but present, ALL is well. The Lord bless you and your's.

W. R.

LETTER XIV.

Lambeth, July 13, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I COULD not answer your kind letter till this day; my cause has been to be heard from day to day before my lord chancellor, but put off, and yesterday was put off to the next term: so that I have, through the good will of my God, an opportunity of seeing you once more, and to talk together by the way of our ever lovely, infinitely precious Jesus, who has so won my heart, that I have no relish (like one in love) to talk of any thing but my BELOVED. Tuesday morning I purpose to set out, and hope to be at ——— about noon Wednesday next, where I shall be glad to meet (at the old house) some of my dear fellow travellers

from ———. Oh, that our meeting
may be to Jesus's glory! I am, in the
best of bonds, of Jesus's own tying, your's,

W. R.

LETTER XV.

Lambeth, Aug. 20, 1765.

My dear friend in our common Lord—of whose mercies I am an amazing monument—what can I say to you of me and mine, but write upon all—GRACE—GRACE. I will give you an account of my life some weeks past, and you will see the goodness of my kind Jesus in all his dealings with me. When I was at Hartlepool, I heard from London that Dr. Griffith thought my wife was sick unto death, and he had no hopes of her recovery. This alarmed me; and I set out immediately, and stopt not till I got to London, where I found things as bad as I had been made to believe: but Dr. Griffith gave her something, to which the Lord gave his blessing; and it abated the fury of

her distemper, God having mercy on her, and on me also. Lady H—— pressing me still to come down to ——, my wife gave leave for me to go, and I went down to Derby Saturday se'nnight. We had there a most refreshing time—Fifteen pulpits were open—Showers of grace came down—Sinners in great numbers awakened, and believers comforted. Mrs. —— was taken ill, and was ordered to Bath, which broke up the family. They went away two days after I got down: but I staid to preach all the week, and especially on Sunday last at Derby, where I was much opposed by the mayor and the churchwardens, and the Arian party; but the Lord stood by me, and I was in the morning at the great church, and in the afternoon at St. Werburgh's. In the evening I got into the fly alone (*in good company*); and upon coming home last night, I found my wife had relapsed, and was again in danger; but again the Great Physician had interposed, and we are in hopes all will be well again.

soon. Mercy, mercy is above all his works.

In these proceedings of Divine Providence, I admire several things; such as,

First, how odd it appears, that friends so dear and beloved as you at —— should be passed by. When I went through ——, it was night; and, thinks I, who would have thought I should have gone by Lady M——'s door without calling? It is the Lord's doing. As to you, I only sent my prayers for you, of which I hope you had the benefit.

Secondly, Here is a plain lesson for you—Did you not expect me? Did not you build upon my coming? You was disappointed. Why? That you might cease from man. Oh! it's good to be weaned from creature props and dependencies. Whatever does this, is a great blessing. If, therefore, my not coming has made you come nearer to Christ, I would therein rejoice; yea, and therein I do rejoice. What of me? Down with me, and up with Christ. But,

Thirdly, I can assure you my heart was divided. I wanted to be at home, and I wanted to stay. Duty and affection called me one way; in spirit I was and am, with great respect, your obliged friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER XVI.

November 1, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR letter of Sept. 9th would not have lain so long without an answer, but it was at my house at Lambeth, to which I expected daily to go from Brighthelmstone to Bath. But Lady H—— having excused my attendance at the dedication of her new chapel, I therefore sent to town for my letters, and, among the rest, found your's: for which, what shall I say? What am I, the very vilest of the vile, that any of the Lord's people should look on me? But to think of his looking on me, whose eyes are a flame of fire, and yet to look with love; O what an humbling thought is that! I declare, the more I daily learn of myself, I grow more amazed how Jesus

should love such an one. But he is all grace, or rather grace is Jesus—not something distinct from him, but he himself—his name, because it is his nature. Unto him be the praise of your kindness to one who has not a single thing to recommend him to your regard but what Jesus's free grace has most marvellously bestowed upon him. Let him have the glory; for he richly deserves it *all*. Whatever good I receive in this world, spiritual or temporal, I am indebted for it to his mere bounty—I crown him for it. Take it off my head, and put it upon his. This is heaven below; for they are doing the same in heaven above. As we throw the crown of grace at his feet, so do they the crown of glory. Thus through him I thank you for your letter, and for all your favours.

As to what you write about my not calling on you in my journey, your disappointment was not, could not be, greater than mine. I learned from it a good lesson. It's very profitable to take notice of what Providences say: they have a

tongue, and speak loudly; and the spiritual ear hears, and receives instruction. You see what man is, and what dependance is to be laid upon him. As I was going along the road, I heard a voice saying, *CEASE YE FROM MAN*, from yourself, from others: put no confidence in them, in your own good, in their good, or in any good to be received from them. The command is, Put not your trust in *princes*, nor in *any* child of man, be he wise, or great, or esteemed good. Nay, look not at them, but with a single eye *LOOK* unto Jesus. In him you will see every thing to put your confidence in—*Grace*, matchless grace in his heart and lips, *beauty* beyond compare, *riches* unsearchable, *honor* infinite, *righteousness* everlasting, *holiness* holy making, and that for ever. And all these he has to give, freely to give, to the unworthy. Look at him, believing, and he is your's, and all he has and is. The sight will change you into his image. As the sun shining puts his glory upon every object, so does Jesus.

O cease then from man—look not at blind man, dark and benighted—look not at this heavy thick earth, nor at any of its glittering toys : they shine only as shined upon. Cease from them all, and look to Jesus. The good Spirit direct and fix your eyes and mine upon him, till we see heaven in his face.

The same voice still pursuing me, I perceived that I was not only to cease from *looking* to man and all human things, but also to cease from depending on them. I was not to *live* upon them. I could, as it were, hear a voice, *Live not upon us, but live upon the Prince of Life*. He is a never-failing fountain of life—He speaks, and the dead live—His voice makes and keeps alive. We live *by* him, and live *on* him, and *in* him. All other persons and things but him concern only the perishing, dying life of the body ; but the life which he gives is his own spiritual, divine, eternal life. I cannot wish you a greater blessing than to hear with power, and to find what I did in my journey—*Cease ye from living*

upon man, and live upon me. So we do, Lord Christ; the life which we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God.

From hence I was led to see the necessity of ceasing to hope for happiness from all these things about us. They have it not to give. It grows not out of that earth which layeth in wickedness, nor can it be increased by any good under the sun; because it is one of the perfect gifts which cometh down from the Father of Lights. And when it is given by his grace, and received by faith, then this true philosopher's stone turns all things into gold. Faith living upon Jesus can turn those things into happiness, which in their own nature could produce nothing but misery. Wonderful transmutation! it changes darkness into light, death into life, weakness into strength, sin into righteousness, mourning into joy, hell into heaven. By this faith we have Christ in us, the hope of glory. Christ dwelling in the heart; and where he is, there all he has is. *All things are our's—*

salvation from all evil, a title to the love of God; and to the glory of God, and a fitness also and meetness for the eternal enjoyment of God in his love and glory. Cease ye from man, then, and all is your's. O may you and I learn to cease from all schemes of happiness in any object but in Jesus. The more we live to him, the more dead he will make us to every thing else. He will let you love your relations, nay, he commands you to love them; but then you must take them from him, as his bounty, and use them as his gifts, dependant on his sovereign will, free to give, free to take away, when and what he pleases. When your will can be made thus really resigned to his will, then he will make you happy, and you will feel something of their blessed oneness with him, who have no will but his, and therefore follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. I mark what you say upon that point. A resigned will is not where there is no rising of the flesh against God's will, but where there is victory over the will of

the flesh. Pray take notice of this; and try whether you have not this evidence of your adoption, that you desire the Father's will, and not your's, may be done.

I am labouring at Brighthelmstone among a sweet people, with whom I am exceedingly happy. The work of dear Jesus prospers among us. His person grows more beloved; his work more precious; fellowship with him more close and intimate, and therefore more happy. Our hearts, warmed with his love, are warm with brotherly love, stirring up one another to press forward for the prize of our high calling, that is, to win Christ, and be found in him at the hour of death, and at the day of judgement. May the same Lord Christ grow dearer to you and your's every day!

I am always bound to pray for your welfare, being by many ties your's,

W. R.

LETTER XVII.

ALL spiritual blessings be on my dear friend! whatever the tender heart or the almighty arm of the loving Jesus has to bestow, may it be all your's! You made me promise to inform you of my motions, which I now fulfil.

God willing, I shall be next Sunday at Mr. C.'s; on Monday morning in Y——; from thence I shall make the best of my way to T——, and, if I hear nothing of you there, I shall proceed to A——. My time is short, so that I can but just stay to take my leave of my friends. What a life is this! hurry, hurry, hurry, from place to place, from this object to that;—weary with seeking, but never finding rest—Happy Christian who is fixed to a point!—Go where he will, ONE object is his ALL. The crucified Saviour is his happiness;

his perfect, everlasting happiness; and this heaven he carries about with him. No time, no place, no circumstances, make any change. He has one LORD, one faith, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Come pain, sickness, poverty, death, the Saviour's love and power bear him up. Come temptations of all kinds, I will be with thee in the hour of temptation, says the Lord God. Where he is, nothing need be feared, because nothing can hurt. Oh, my friend, the true knowledge of Jesus Christ is an infallible cure for all the miseries which come into the world by sin. There is no evil of mind or body, temporal or eternal, but our precious dear Lord is by office engaged to remove it. And shall not you and I value and love him? What can we set our hearts upon; what can bid so high for them as this adorable Saviour? May he enable us to give them to Him, and then he will sanctify all their inferior loves; will let us love them as flowing from his grace; so that this love will make us love him more. This love is Heaven.

All joy and glory is in it. And as for the happiness of his redeemed people, we shall never know how great it is till we join the church above. It will be a glorious meeting. Jesus bless you! Amen! Amen. I am, for his sake, your faithful friend,

W. R.

LETTER XVIII.

Nov. 25, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE much to tell you of that ever dear and precious Lover—your best friend and mine. I had a token of his goodness in your last, for which I thank Lady M——t, but, above all, her Lord and mine. I have a tale to relate of his free and kind heart, which will last longer than this world. It is really heaven to be relating it, and I cannot hold my tongue. He makes himself so lovely by continual favours, that my heart is quite won, and by his sweet constraint is *now* fixed upon him. I would turn to other LOVERS, but sweet Jesus will not let me. O, the boundless grace of his most amiable breast! Finite nature cannot tell (how should it?) his infinite love. But as we get emptied of SELF, we know

and experience more of his love. This I wish you, and my very dear Miss ——, growth in grace, that is, self-abasement, and growth in the knowledge of God our Saviour—may he empty you of self, and fill you with more of his good things. We have very much of his presence and glory in our assemblies this winter, more than ever. His work revives amongst us: and, cold and frosty as the weather is, our heart burns within us. Last night St. Dunstan's was a very Bethel; it was like the dedication of the Temple, when the glory of Jehovah came down and filled the house. I was preaching on these words—*My meditation of him shall be sweet.*—And so it was indeed. When I was setting forth his undertakings, his suitableness to fulfil them as God-man, his actual fulfilling of them, his power to apply and to make them effectual; how he does this by his word preached, in the hand of the Spirit made the means of working faith in the heart, and of producing the fruits of faith in fellowship with Jesus and his fulness, by

which Jesus grows sweeter and sweeter, and so brings us to the end of our meditation, the sweetest of all even of divine sweets, the enjoyment of Jesus in his kingdom of glory; O! what a seal did he set to this preached gospel! He made it the power of God. The meditation of his goodness yesterday has still a relish and delightful savor! to-day it is sweet, very, very sweet, indeed. Pray, mind, I do not make this my salvation—No, but these sweet streams lead me to the fountain—I do not rest in them; but, if these be so sweet, what must the fountain be? If little faith finds Jesus so precious, what must precious Jesus be, when faith yields to sight and sense? My dear, dear friend, prize this pearl, it is inestimable. Two things I would beg your notice of; I know you have received him. The

First is, press for more knowledge—read, pray, hear, to be made more teachable and humble, that Jesus may have the glory of such discoveries as he makes of his person and of his work. And do not

stop ; press on, as long as you live, sit very low, very low at Christ's feet, to hear his words. The

Second is, make use of his fulness ; you are welcome, you cannot use it too much. Hence comes sweet fellowship, and by it all things will do you good. Carry them to that best friend, pour them out into his loving bosom. He delights in familiarity. You have been ill ; that is the best for you : live by faith, and Jesus will make it plain to you. Your's, in that incomparable Lover, W. R.

LETTER XIX.

Lambeth, Jan. 16, 1766.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE several reasons for writing to you at this time. The first is, that ever so long ago I wrote you an huge scribble; to which having received no answer, I thought it was high time I should get a little out of your debt, and pay off some of my old score with these scraps of paper. I hope you will take them, according to the American phrase, for *paper currency*. Put every letter to account, and, having rated them just what you please, make me creditor for it.

My second reason for writing is to inquire after you. How can I help being concerned for those whom I love, especi-

ally in the Lord? Such friends I have at——. It would be a real pleasure to me, and a profit to yourself, if I knew what to ask for you, when I go to Court. How is your bodily health? I know you are generally weak and low, and I know it is good for you, yea, the best of all for you. The Physician who never mistook a case prescribes to your tender constitution. His prescription is perfect love. He could not bring about his gracious designs any other way; he wants to wean you from a life of sense, therefore in infinite mercy he takes away sensible enjoyments. He would have you to go on from faith to faith; but how could faith grow so fast, as by keeping you from those things which are its very bane and destruction? He is bringing you to more fellowship with him than you have had, therefore you must have less fellowship with the world. Fewer outward comforts will certainly make you experience more spiritual comforts. This is our Physician's fixed practice — he never varies from it,

not in one instance : mind, one of his favourite patients, THY ROD AND THY STAFF COMFORT ME : the afflicting rod could not comfort, pain could not be pleasure, no chastening can be in itself joyous ; but the staff, the being supported under the rod, and the feeling of that support, he found faith and patience bear him up under the rod, which brought him to such close communion with his gracious Saviour, that he was comforted under the cross. This is also the experience of one highly favoured, as you may read, Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. Let me know, then, how your soul prospereth under Jesus's care.

I have also a third reason for writing, which is to wish you a happy new year, the happiest of all you ever saw, and therefore I wish you more, still more enjoyment of our infinitely rich, everlastingly precious Jesus. You will live to a blessed purpose, if every day of this new year you get more out of SELF, and live more *in* and *on* Jesus. We have had a most remarkable time this Christmas of his grace and love.

I have scarce an acquaintance who has not been favoured with blessed visits from him. O, how great is his goodness! how great is his beauty! Incomparable both! May your dear heart, my friend, feel what I did at the Lock on Innocents' day, when I was preaching on these words of Ps. lxxxvii. *All my springs are in thee.* I gave them first a translation of the psalm, then a paraphrase, then application: the substance of the two first I send you: the psalm literally rendered runs thus. Title is,

“ For the sons of miserable man, a psalm to be sung.”

Ver. 1. He is to be established in the mountains of his holy one.—Mind, how sweetly the Holy Spirit begins; he mentions not who this He that was to be established is, for all who are under his teaching know.

2. Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

3. Weighty things are spoken of thee, thou city of Alehim. Selah, attend to this.—What this love in v. 2 was for, what these

weighty things in v. 3 were, the next words shew, where God the Father is introduced speaking.

4. I will cause it to be remembered by them who knew me in Rahab and Babylon, behold Philistia, and Tyre, the people of Ethiopia—HERE WAS THE NAME BORN—born in Zion, to be the Saviour of Rahab and Babylon, Philistia and Tyre, and Ethiopia, even as many as the Lord our God shall call in these countries.

David, speaking by the Holy Ghost, adds, in verse

5. And of Zion it shall be said, a person and a person (God and man) shall be born in her, and he himself the Most High shall perfectly establish her. (Namely, the church founded upon the incarnate God, against which, he says, himself, the gates of hell shall not prevail.)

6. Jehovah shall record it, when he is describing the people, THAT HERE WAS THE NAME BORN; that divine name in which alone there is salvation, and from which all true joy both in heaven and earth

ariseth, as the saints sung in the Old Testament, as the angels sung at his birth, and as the redeemed of the Lord will sing for ever.

6. And the singers, as well as the players on instruments, shall say, ALL MY SPRINGS ARE IN THEE (ALL, all the springs of grace, of glory, all arise from Jehovah manifest in the flesh). O that such a spring as we had at the opening of these words may flow into and refresh your heart quite through the wilderness till you come to the fountain-head; may you still drink of the water which flows through the rock Christ, till you drink of that which flows from the throne of the Lamb. And so it will be: the Rock will follow you, and you will have the comfort of it, if you keep in mind that little word IN, all my springs are IN thee, not only from thee, through thee (which is true) but IN thee. If faith fix here, all will be well. For if at any time the stream fail, then you may go up to the fountain-head, making up your happiness in Jesus, get you whatever it be, little or much, in

present comfort out of his fulness. Yet still he, and all he is and has, is your's.

My paper grows short, and my fingers are so cold I can scarce write; yet I have a fourth reason for writing—upon Mr. Alexander Cole's death. I wrote to Newcastle for his papers, especially for a book in manuscript, after the manner of the Pilgrim's Progress: my brother sent me word, his daughter at —— had been over, and carried away all her father's papers. I wish you could get this book and read it, and send me your opinion of it. —— perhaps could help you, to whom give my kind love.

One thing more, and I have done. Yesterday I dined with Mr. Berridge. He was making great complaint of his debts, contracted by his keeping, out of his own living, two preachers and their horses, and several local preachers, and for the rents of several barns in which they preach. He sees it was wrong to run in debt, and will be more careful. But it is done. My application is to Lady Marg-t. Will you

stand my friend with her, and tell her Ber-
 ridge's case? If she pleases to assist him,
 I should be glad to convey her charity to
 him. You will be the judge whether this
 be proper or not to mention to her. I beg my
 kind love to her. Nothing is yet done at
 Blackfriars: but Jesus does all things well,
 he times all things for the best; I am sure
 of it, therefore I wait my LORD's time, and
 blessed waiting it is—May he bless you and
 your's in body and soul, and that for ever
 and ever: so prays,

W. R.

LETTER XX.

Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1766.

ALL the blessings of Jesus's love be with dear —— . I was not in a hurry to answer your letter, because Mr. Berridge promised to make his acknowledgements to —— ; and because the time was at hand when my Lord Chancellor declared he would end the affair at Blackfriars. You have heard of the event. My friends are rejoicing all around me, and wishing me that joy which I cannot take. It is my Master's will, and I submit. He knows what is best, both for his own glory, and his people's good. And I am certain he makes no mistake in either of these points. But my head hangs down upon the occasion, through the awful apprehensions which I ever had of the cure of souls. I am frightened to think of watching over two or three thousand,

when it is work enough to watch over one. The plague of my own heart almost wearies me to death ; what can I do with such a vast number ? Besides, I had promised myself a little rest and retirement in the evening of life, and had already sat down with a—SOUL, TAKE THINE EASE. And, lo ! my fine plan is broke all to pieces. I am called into a public station, and to the sharpest engagement, just as I had got into winter quarters—an engagement, too, for life. I can see nothing before me, so long as the breath is in my body, but war—and that with unreasonable men—a divided parish, an angry clergy, a wicked Sodom, and a wicked world ; all to be resisted and overcome : besides all these, a sworn enemy, subtle and cruel, with whom I can make no peace, no, not a moment's truce, night and day, with all his children, and his host, is aiming at my destruction. When I take counsel of the flesh, I begin to faint. But when I go to the sanctuary, I see my cause good, and my Master is Almighty—a tried friend, and then he makes my cou-

rage revive. Although I am no way fit for the work, yet he called me to it, and on him I depend for strength to do it, and for success to crown it. I utterly despair of doing any thing as of myself, and therefore the more I have to do, I shall be forced to live more by faith upon him. In this view I hope to get a great income by my LIVING. I shall want my Jesus more, and shall get closer to him. As he has made my application to him more necessary and more constant, he has given me stronger tokens of his love. Methinks I can hear his sweet voice,—“Come closer, come closer, soul! nearer yet; I will bring you into circumstances that you cannot do one moment without me.” O that you could always hear that voice, it would be your heaven! And, indeed, it is his language—nothing but love is on his tongue; but the noise of the flesh sometimes drowns his small still voice.—Comfort would flow into your heart, like a river, if the ears of faith were but open to attend to the endearments of Jesus. “Soul, thou shalt not live at a

distance from me; I bought thee with a great price; thou art mine. When I afflict, it is to bring thee nearer to myself; to make thee glad in me: to bring thy heart to me. Thou shalt not make up thy comforts in the streams: come, come up nearer, nearer still, to the fountain-head. To make thee, to force thee to live happy in my fulness, I will dry up the streams, and so will I teach thee "to make me ALL in ALL." The infinitely lovely Lamb of God teach you this lesson! All his word preaches it, all his providences proclaim it. Every cross says—Go to Jesus, live near his bleeding heart, or else I shall break the back of your patience. Every difficulty says, Go to Jesus, and he will make you strong in the power of his might to overcome. The world, and all the things in it, say, and the believer has ears to hear, Go to Jesus, there is no good in us—it is all in him. Whatever comes, I go to Jesus with it, and all is well. His smiles are humbling, his rod is sanctifying; in all his dealings he is good, and doeth good.

I know these things as well in theory, as I see the words upon the paper. But to practise them is indeed hard, except in his strength, to whom all things are possible: in it and by it all things we meet with will not only bring us to live more *upon* Christ, but will also bring us to live more *to* Christ. By doing the one, we do the other. He that makes him all, shews forth most of his praise. What can glorify Christ like that believer who attempts nothing without consulting him, undertakes no work or duty but in his strength, rejoices in nothing but in Jesus, and in his salvation? O that you may learn, my dear friend, thus to exalt King Jesus! I would have you to be ever bringing some honour to him, by making him your ALL in deed and in truth. Praise his fulness by living always upon it, and then he will make you always happy. Let him be all your salvation, and all your desire:—all your salvation, as to the merit of it; all your desire, as to the efficacy of it; all your salvation in purchase; all your desire in enjoyment.

So he is in heaven : O that we could make him so upon earth.

I have one favour to beg of you. Do not refuse me. You see my station—you hear my difficulties. Will you remember me *to him*, who calleth the things that be not as though they were. He can send to war at his cost, and for his glory. If you love me, make mention of me when you go to Court. Pray for usefulness and for humility. I cease not to mention you.

I have received Lady B—'s money, and have been much in gaols of late. I am confined to church people ; and when I see a prisoner, a dissenter, and cannot relieve him, with a wife and several children, it makes my very heart ache. So I thought your gift was from heaven. I have made one family happy, and shall make others, and by-and-by will send you the particulars.

W. R.

LETTER XXI.

July 22, 1766.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM wishing for your prosperity in body and soul, but above all that your soul may prosper : and it is in the most thriving state when you are lowest and vilest in your own eyes, and Jesus alone is eyed and esteemed. This is growth. As self is kept down, so is Jesus exalted. Oh, what views have I of this manner of growing in grace ! Let me talk to you freely of it at our next meeting, as I have learned it not from books, but from God's word, and God's teaching.

I am learning, though dull, how to eye him in all things : as it is my privilege, so I find it my happiness : but, alas ! alas ! I am a miserable learner. However, I set

out afresh, and resolve not to give over aiming at my lesson. Do ever so well, I would do better, for I see in him worlds of beauty and glory, which will take up a long eternity to study, and, what is best of all, to *enjoy*. To my dear, dearest Jesus, I commend you and all your's. I am, very sincerely, your's in the common Lord,

W. R.

LETTER XXII.

Lambeth, Sep. 30, 1766.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been carrying here and there the sweet savor of Jesus's dear name ever since I left you. I was in Sussex for a month, and have heard, since my return, a better account of your health, for which I am thankful. The Lord having appointed you for his heavenly kingdom, has also appointed all the steps which are to lead you thither. Every pain is in the covenant. Your confinement, your miscarriages, your faintings, your disappointments, not one thing that thwarts your will, but it is in God's will. Nothing can befall you but what is ordered, contrived for you by wisdom, brought upon you by love. O for eyes to see, for a heart to receive, all God's dealings with you in this covenant view! How

sweet would be your many trials, if you found them ALL appointed and managed for you by the best of friends! Learn to receive them thus.

I am going to Bath, and hope for a little leisure there to write to you a long letter. My subject is ready. After you receive it, I shall be glad to hear how your sentiments and mine agree. Pray remember me with many thanks to ——. I am in debt more than I can acknowledge. My best respects to her. Pray for a poor worm.

W. R.

LETTER XXIII.

Lambeth, Nov. 15, 1766.

I AM indebted much to my dear friend, but among other things I owe you a note of hand, which I am now ready to pay. I wanted to talk with you at ——— upon the temper and disposition of a true believer; but, being prevented there, I promised to send you my thoughts upon this subject, which I am the more ready to do to-day, because the reason of my making the promise not only still subsists, but is also increasing. A temper directly contrary to the Christian is spreading among professors: I see the delusion grow, and I am a witness to the baneful effects of it. How many have you and I heard of who want to be something in themselves, and, rather than not to be so, will be beholden to Christ to set them up with a stock of grace?

They would gladly receive a talent from him, that by being faithful to grace given, and trading well with it, they may look with delight on their improvements, and thereby hope to get more grace and more glory. This is the Popish plan, the Arminian, the Baxterian, the Wesleyan—very flattering to nature, exceedingly pleasing to self-righteousness, very exalting, yea, it is crowning FREE WILL, and debasing King Jesus. I would be more jealous than I am over you in this matter, if I had not seen how the Lord teaches you, and warns you of this rock. Your frequent indispositions are his sweet lessons, by which he would bring you to the true gospel frame of spirit, which is this:—It is the proper work of the grace of Jesus, to humble the proud sinner, to make him and to keep him sensible of his wants, convinced always that he has not any good of his own, and cannot possibly of himself obtain any, either in earth or heaven, but what he must be receiving every moment out of the fulness of Jesus.

The devil fell by pride, and he drew man

into the same crime. He promised him independence, and he still persuades deceived man to set up for himself. That's the scheme of all unawakened men—they are resolved to be happy in spite of God. The Spirit of Jesus is sent to humble this proud sinner, which he does, by giving him a view of God's holy nature, and God's holy law. This makes sin, and consequently the sinner, hateful; discovers his guilt and his danger: if he attempts to do any thing to make God love him, the Holy Spirit humbles him for that very thing, by shewing him the sinfulness of his motive, and the imperfection of the action. Whatever he seeks to rest in, the Spirit of Jesus detects the false foundation, till he leaves him no resource but to believe in the only begotten Son of God. So that when he comes to Jesus he is stript of all, quite naked and blind, moneyless and friendless, empty of good as the devil and sin could make him. This is all the fitness and preparation for Christ which I know of. And when Christ is thus received, the

same Spirit which would let him, the sinner, bring nothing to Christ, will now make him bring all from Christ, and so keep him sensible of his wants. He will teach the believer more daily of his poverty, weakness, unworthiness, vileness, ignorance, &c. that he may be kept humble, without any good but what he is forced to fetch out of the fulness of Jesus. And when he would go any where else for comfort, to duties, frames, gifts, and graces (for pride will live, and thrive too, upon any thing but Jesus)—his Spirit makes them dry and lean, and will not let him stop short of the fountain-head of all true comfort. In short, he will glorify nothing but Jesus. He will then stain the pride of all greatness, and of all goodness, excepting what is derived from the fulness of the incarnate God.

I know one who learnt this very slowly, but has had much pains taken with him; and to make what I have been saying more plain, I would illustrate it by his experience. He was a very, very vain, proud

young man; knew almost every thing but himself, and therefore was mighty fond of himself. He met with many disappointments to his pride, which only made him prouder, till the Lord was pleased to let him see and feel the plague of his own heart. At this time my acquaintance with him began. He tried every method that can be tried to get peace, but found none. In his despair of all things else, he betook himself to Jesus, and was most kindly received. He trusted the word of promise, and experienced the sweetness in the promise. After this he went through various frames and trials of faith, too many to mention, and he is now got, where may Mrs. —, your dear sister, get, and as far beyond as you can.

First, he has been brought to a clear conviction, that *all fulness of good is in Jesus*, as clear, as that all the sap in the branch is from the stock on which it grows, as that all the nourishment in the member is from the body. What has the branch or the member, except what they receive?

Now this continual receiving from Jesus, every thing saying, “You must go to him, you must go to him,” is a most humbling lesson. And my friend says, it is nothing but this which crucifies his pride: he has been attempting for many years to BE something, to DO something of himself, but could not succeed: disappointed again and again, yet he would not give it up, till God made him feel, in him, that is, in his flesh, dwelled *no good thing*; and now he writes folly, weakness, sin, on all that is his own; not only clearly convinced that all fulness of good is in Jesus, but is also, in the second place, *content* it should be in him. It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. It pleases the Holy Spirit to testify of his fulness, and to glorify nothing but it; and by his teaching it, pleases the believer. He is made quite satisfied that all fulness should dwell in that dear God-man: content to have nothing but what he must go to him for; yea, happy to go to Jesus for those very things of which he himself is empty, and which

he cannot have any where else. My friend's heart glows, and his very countenance brightens up, and one catches fire at his words, when he is talking upon this subject. "O," says he, "that you did but know what I experience in living upon the fulness of Jesus!—God's will and mine are one in this matter—this subjection to his will is *heaven regained*; so I find it. I rest perfectly on the fulness, and I enjoy most sweetly what God has laid up in it for my use. My conscience has a peace, that passeth all understanding, through faith in the blood of the Lamb. I see myself in him perfectly accepted, perfectly justified, perfectly comely in his comeliness, perfectly happy in his love—all the desires of the soul satisfied with Jesus's person, and Jesus's work. This, this is the death of pride. Here, free-will, self-righteousness, a legal spirit, cannot work. The spirit and power of Jesus in this his glory make them hide their heads."

This is living like a Christian. It is a

life, in one respect, only below an angel's; and yet, great and blessed as it is, I have heard my friend talk in a very uncommon strain upon a state even beyond this, which he calls *heaven enjoyed*, and that is,

Thirdly, he is *thankful* that all fulness dwells in Jesus—not only is convinced of it, and content with it, but also blesses God for its being in Jesus. This is all they do in the highest heaven, and he has most of heaven who does this most like them. My friend describes his meaning thus: “I live out of myself—I nothing have, I nothing am, but folly and sin—Jesus is my life; in him is the fulness of its being, and of its comforts: whatever I want, I find it in him. I experience day by day the kindness of his heart, and the bounty of his hand. Blessings on him, my heart enjoys what no tongue can describe. Whatever I go to him for, he always sends me away with matter of thankfulness. Constant fellowship with him endears to me his person more and more. Communion with him in his offices makes

him infinitely lovely. Partaking of his overflowing love, makes it everlastingly precious. And living upon the fulness of these, is the fulness of joy. Glory, Glory, be to God-Jesus for ever and ever: Heaven and earth say with my heart, Amen."

Thus does my friend illustrate the definition which I give you of the true gospel-frame of spirit. I hope we shall live to talk of it, and live to enjoy it more. Nothing else is worth living for. All means of grace are only useful as they help us to live thus. All providences, sicknesses, losses, successes, are only so far blessings, as they lead us more out of ourselves into the fulness of Jesus: my dear Mrs. —, I can write to-day upon nothing else. I hope I write seasonably. When you open this letter, you will want this lesson: I am sure you will, and God bless it to you; I follow it with my prayers, and I can do no more; but our common Lord will hear, I know he will; and will accompany my poor words with his presence. To the care of his dear

loving heart I commend you and your's. Wonder not I have not written before: I have been in a more preaching way this summer than I ever was in my life, and travelled much more, and have had with me a sweet savor of Jesus's dear name. O he is precious to my soul; how much, even now, I shall want time in eternity to tell: so precious, that I think I have not long to be here, or else the matchless Lover will make this earth a very heaven. But I say, I the vilest worm that ever crawled or escaped hell, not to set me up, but *him*, the high exalted worthy Saviour. Again to him I commend you. Your's truly in him,

W. R.

LETTER XXIV.

Lambeth, Jan. 24, 1767.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE waited till I am quite wearied out. Many a look and prayer have I sent ————ward, but all in vain. No tidings could I get, till Mr. ———— told me of your state. And on his information I am encouraged to enquire after you and your's, and after a very, very long letter, which I wrote upon my coming home from Bath. Pray give me some account, for indeed I long to know about these matters. The letter was upon a subject that I scarce ever mentioned before to any body; it was *my own* experience; and I would not have it lost for a great deal. I have been trying it by scripture, and I could give you infallible proofs of its being agreeable to the

word of God; and perhaps may, when I hear from you next. It will be some satisfaction to me (as I never take copies of any thing) to read my own history at —. Before that time I may have got a little lower, and have drank deeper into the knowledge of Jesus. That seems to be the end of living, to have self abased, and Jesus exalted; and these two are inseparable. As self sinks in esteem, Jesus rises. When self is nothing but sin, then Jesus is a glorified Saviour. When self is nothing but misery, then Jesus is all heaven. I have been led to take particular notice of this lately from these views:

First, the person of Jesus; he was Jehovah. All the glory of the Godhead was in the man Jesus. And what was his appearance? mean, to the last degree. A worm, and no man, the very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people. What was his form? a servant, a poor servant. What were his tempers? meek and lowly, yea, meekness and lowliness itself: a perfect original, of whom all his disciples may

learn to be meek and lowly. His way to glory was humility; so is our's. His glory, indeed, was his humility; so is our's. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, was true of the head as well as of the members. O that you and I may be in this conformed to him! because herein,

Secondly, our fellowship with him consists. Whatever a man sees in himself great or good, is an absolute hinderance to the enjoyment of Jesus. Whatever he sees vile and wicked, therein (if he has faith) he will enjoy the Saviour. The more he sees, the more enjoyment; for that which humbles the sinner brings him nearer to the Saviour. The humblest sinner is capable of the closest communion, and is thereby fitted for the largest communications of Jesus's love. The emptiest hold the most, and the emptiest receive the most. O for daily emptying! This self, this full self, what reasonings, what legality, what self-righteousness has it, and all to keep us from being filled with the fulness of Christ: this is your grand

enemy, that idol SELF. The Lord crucify it by his own almighty grace! and to induce you to apply to him for this power, I would recommend it to you,

Thirdly, in reading the Bible, take notice of the persons to whom the promises are made. Their character is always one and the same! the poor in spirit; the contrite and broken in heart; the hungry, the thirsty, the meek and lowly. Take this general promise as an instance, *God giveth grace to the humble*, and with grace he gives all things. See how I get writing on without intending it; I only sat down to enquire about you, and all our dear friends; Miss —— at the head of them. Lo! here is a long scroll started up. In love remember me to all friends, and, if you please, with my hearty prayers for their welfare at ——. Mine eyes have tears for them. Dear Jesus reveal himself so to you in his glory, as to eclipse all created good, and *yourself* especially. So prays a poor sinner.

W. R.

LETTER XXV.

March 21, 1767.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I would not have let your long and kind epistle be so carelessly passed by, but that I am at present left to myself without a curate. All my time is taken up with parish duty; a great deal of it very unprofitably spent. But I am called to it, and I must, and do, submit. I have sat down, and I will write on till I am interrupted. And I begin with telling you how your last refreshed me. It was a seasonable feast; for I was in a sad taking about the account which I had sent you of myself, having never found any freedom to do it to any body living before; and I feared either it should be lost, or fall into any

other person's hand. I am glad it is in your's. Now you know whereabouts I am, and what my present state is, it may be of some use to you to be informed how I was brought unto it. God's dealings with me have been wonderful, not only for the royal sovereignty of his richest grace, but also for the manner of his teaching, on which I cannot look back without adoring my meek and lowly prophet. He would have all the honour (and he well deserves it) of working out and also of applying his glorious salvation. When I was in trouble and soul-concern, he would not let me learn of man. I went every where to hear, but nobody was suffered to speak to my case. The reason of this I could not tell then, but I know it now. The Arminian methodists flocked about me, and courted my acquaintance, which became a great snare unto me. By their means I was brought into a difficulty, which distressed me several years. "I was made to believe that part of my title to salvation was to be inherent—something

called holiness in myself, which the grace of God was to help me to. And I was to get it by watchfulness, prayer, fasting, hearing, reading, sacraments, &c.; so that after much and long attendance in those means, I might be able to look inward, and be pleased with my own improvement, finding I was grown in grace, a great deal holier, and more deserving of heaven than I had been." I do not wonder now that I received this doctrine. It was sweet food to a proud heart. I feasted on it, and to work I went. It was hard labour and sad bondage, but the hopes of having something to glory in of my own kept up my spirits. I went on, day after day, striving, agonizing (as they called it); but still I found myself not a bit better. I thought this was the fault, or that, which, being amended, I should certainly succeed; and therefore set out afresh, but still came to the same place. No galley-slave worked harder, or to less purpose. Sometimes I was quite discouraged, and ready to give all up; but the discovery of some sup-

posed hinderance set me to work again. Then I would redouble my diligence, and exert all my strength. Still I got no ground. This made me often wonder; and still more, when I found, at last, that I was going backward. Methought, I grew worse. I saw more sin in myself, instead of more holiness, which made my bondage very hard, and my heart very heavy. The thing I wanted, the more I pursued it, flew farther and farther from me. I had no notion that this was divine teaching, and that God was delivering me from my mistake in this way: so that the discoveries of my growing worse were dreadful arguments against myself, until now and then a little light would break in and shew me something of the glory of Jesus: but it was a glimpse only—gone in a moment. As I saw more of my heart, and began to feel more of my corrupt nature, I got clearer views of gospel grace; and in proportion as I came to know myself, I advanced in the knowledge of Christ Jesus. But this was very slow work: the

old leaven of self-righteousness, new christened *holiness*, stuck close to me still, and made me a very dull scholar in the school of Christ. But I kept on, making a little progress; and as I was forced to give up one thing, and another, on which I had some dependance, I was left, at last, stript of all, and neither had, nor could see where I could have, aught to rest my hopes, that I could call my own. This made way for blessed views of Jesus. Being now led to very deep discoveries of my own legal heart, of the dishonour which I had put upon the Saviour, of the despite I had done to the Spirit of his grace, by resisting and perverting the workings of his love, these things humbled me. I became very vile in mine own eyes. I gave over striving; the pride of free-will, the boast of mine own works, were laid low. And as SELF was debased, the scriptures became an open book, and every page presented the Saviour in new glory. Then were explained to me these truths, which

are now the very joy and life of my soul.
Such as,

First, The plan of salvation, contrived by the wisdom of Jehovah Alehim, fulfilled in the divine person and work of Jesus, and applied by the Spirit of Jesus. The whole was so ordered, from first to last, that all the glory of it might be secured to the persons in Jehovah. The devil fell by pride; he tempted and seduced man into pride: therefore the Lord, to hide pride from man, has so contrived his salvation, that he who glorieth should have nothing to glory in but the Lord.

Secondly, The benefits of salvation are all the free gifts of free grace, conferred without any regard to what the receiver of them is; nothing being looked at by the Giver but his own sovereign glory. Therefore the receivers are the ungodly, the worst of them, the unworthy, the chief of sinners; such are saved freely by *grace* through faith, and that not of themselves: it (namely, salvation by faith) is

the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Thirdly, When I considered these benefits one by one, it was the very death of self-righteousness and self-complacency; for when I looked at the empty hand which faith puts forth to receive them, whence was the hand emptied—whence came faith—whence the power to put forth the empty hand—and whence the benefits received upon putting it forth? All is of God; he humbles us, that we may be willing to receive Christ; he keeps us humble, that we may be willing to live by faith upon Christ received: and as it is a great benefit to have this faith, so it is,

Fourthly, A great, inestimably great benefit to live by faith; for this is a life in every act of it dependant upon another. Self is renounced, so far as Christ is lived upon. And faith is the most emptying, pulling down grace; most emptying, because it says and proves it too. *In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,*

and therefore it will not let a man see aught good in himself, but pulls down every high thought, and lays it low in subjection to Jesus. It is called the *faith of the Son of God*, because he is the author and the finisher of it; he gives it; he gives to live by it; he gives the benefits received by it; he gives the glory laid up for it; so that if I live to God, and in any act have living communion with God, it is by nothing in myself, but wholly by the faith of the Son of God. When I wanted to do any thing commanded (what they call duties), I found,

Fifthly, A continual matter of humiliation. I was forced to be dependant for the will and for the power, and, having done my best, I could not present it to God but upon the golden altar that sanctifieth the gifts; not the worthiness, not the goodness of the gifts, but the sanctifying grace of the Great high priest alone can make them holy and acceptable. How low did this lay the pride of good works; since, after all, they were viler than dung,

unless perfumed with the sweet incense of Jesus's blood and righteousness? Here I learnt to eye him in all my works and duties, the alpha and omega of them; the life and spirit of all my prayers, and sermons, and hearing, and reading, and ordinances; they are all dead works, unless done in and by faith of the Son of God. Against this blessed truth, of which I am as certain as that I am alive, I find my nature kick. To this hour a legal heart will be creeping into duties, to get between me and my dear Jesus, whom I go to meet in them. But he soon recovers me from the temptation, makes me loathe myself for it, and gets fresh glory to his sovereign grace; and as all the great and good things ever done in the world were done by faith, so all the crosses ever endured with patience were from the same cause: which is,

Sixthly, Another humbling lesson. I find to this moment so much unbelief and impatience in myself, that if God was to leave me to be tried with any thing that

crossed my will, if it was but a feather, it would break my back. Nothing tends to keep me vile in my own eyes like this fretting and murmuring, and heart-burning, when the will of God in the least thwarts my will. I read, *the trial of your faith worketh patience*; the trial of mine, the direct contrary. Instead of patient submission, I want to have mine own way, to take very little physic, and that very sweet: so the flesh lusteth. But the Physician knows better; he knows when and what to prescribe: may every potion purge out this impatient, proud, unbelieving temper, so that faith may render healthful to the soul, what is painful to the flesh. And as no cross can be endured without the faith of the Son of God, so

Seventhly, and lastly, There is no comfortable view of leaving the world, but by the same faith. *These all*, who had obtained a good report in every age, *died in faith*. On their death-bed they did not look for present peace and future glory, but to the Lamb of God. Their great works, their

eminent services, their various sufferings, all were cast behind their backs, and they died as they lived, looking at nothing but Jesus. He was their antidote against the fear and against the power of death. They feared not the cold death-sweat; Jesus's bloody sweat was their dependance. The dart lost its force on Jesus's side. The sting was lost in his corpse. Death stung itself to death, when it killed him. There is life, life in its highest exaltation and glory, in not breathing the air of this world. This life, through death, Jesus entered on, and we enter on it now by faith; and when our breath is stopt, we have this life, as he has it, pure, spiritual, and divine. Because he lives it, we shall live it also. Yes, my-dear friend, we, you and I, after we have lived a little longer, to empty us more, to bring us more out of ourselves, that we may be humbled, and Jesus exalted more, we shall fall asleep in Jesus, not die, but sleep; not see, not taste death, so he promises us; but in his dear arms sweetly go to rest in our weary

bodies, when our souls shall be with the Lord. And then we shall be perfect in that lesson, which we learn so very slow in this present world, namely, that from him, and of him, and to him, are all things; to whom be all the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

These are the things which God himself has taught me. Man had no hand at all in it. No person in the world, not I myself: for I fought against them as long as I could; so that my present possession of them, with all the rich blessings which they contain, is from my heavenly teacher alone. And I have not learned them, as we do mathematics, to keep them in memory, and to make use of them when I please; no, I find in me to this moment an opposition to every gospel truth, both to the belief of it in my head, and to the comfort of it in my heart. I am still a poor dependant creature, sitting very low at the feet of my dear teacher, and learning to admire that love of his, which brought me down, and keeps me down at his feet.

There be my seat, till I learn my lesson perfectly. That will soon be. There is nothing in his presence but what is like himself. In heaven all is perfection. The saints are as humble, as they are happy. Clothed with glory and clothed with humility, with one heart and one voice they cry, WORTHY IS THE LAMB. They look not at, they praise not, one another; but the Lamb is glorified in his saints, and will have from them never-ending praise and glory for the glory which his sovereign grace has bestowed upon them. In a measure I now feel what they do. My heart is in tune, and I can join that blessed hymn—looking at him as the giver of grace (and grace is glory begun, *nota bene*), as they look at him the giver of glory. I can take the crown, most gladly, from the head of all my graces, as they do from the head of their glory, and cast it down at his loving feet. WORTHY IS THE LAMB. He is—he is—blessings on him for ever and ever!

Ought not I to say so, indebted as I am

to that precious Lamb of God? You see how he has dealt with me—the kindness, the gentleness of his ways,—his royal bounty,—the magnificence of his love. Adore and praise him with me, and for me. And learn, my dear friend, from what I have here related, to trust him more. When he shews you your vile heart, your poor works, when dreadful corruptions stir, and are ready to break out, go to him, freely, boldly; stop not a moment to reason with your own proud spirit, but fall down at his footstool. Tell him just what you feel. He loves to hear our complaints poured with confidence into his bosom. And never, never on earth, will you get such fellowship with him, so close, so blessed, as when you converse with him in this poverty of spirit. Let nothing keep you from him; whatever you meet with, let it drive you to him; for all good is from him, and all evil is turned into good by him. O wondrous Saviour! Here was I going on, and I hope in this theme, never to stop—But the Rev. Mr.

— is come in—one just ordained. I don't leave Jesus to talk to him, but I am going to talk to him of sweet Jesus. To him I commend you and your's. Believe me very truly your's in that most lovely Lord Christ, most precious Jesus,

W. R.

LETTER XXVI.

Lambeth, Sept. 27, 1767.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been waiting for good news, but in vain. I wanted some satisfactory answer to your last, and though I can give you none, yet I take up my pen to make an apology for the great Lord (who will not send you a minister), lest you should begin to think hardly of him, and of me, too, his poor servant. I would have you to remember, that the government is upon his shoulders—the government of heaven and earth. His church is the object of his special government. It is his *body*—bought with his blood—quickened by his Spirit—kept by his power—blest with his love. All its concerns are upon his heart: his

eyes are upon ——: he sees his people there with perfect complacency; and they shall want nothing that he has to give. Among the rest, he beholds you and your's, and is managing all for your good. All shall be blest to you, your relations, your house, your substance, your state of body and of mind, your life and death, things temporal and spiritual. He will turn all things into blessings; for he does all things well. He does not, he cannot, make one mistake in his government; no, not the least. He is wisdom, he is love, he is power itself. Infinite wisdom directs his love, and sets it to work; and, being Almighty, he makes all things work together for the best to his dear people. You are as dear to him at —— as we are at London. When he knows it to be right, he will send you a pastor after his own heart; and when he does not want one there, you cannot get one. When it is right you should be comforted, you shall be humbled, and then your consolations shall abound: and when it is right you

should be low and mourning, he will bring good, yea, joy out of heaviness. Think of all that his power can do; his love disposes, his covenant binds him, to do it for his people.

O! blessed Mrs. ——! What a happy woman are you! Jesus is your's. All he is, all he has (and mind he is the Lord of all things), is your's. Who is like unto your Jesus? None, none, in heaven or earth: for your friend has all power in heaven and earth, and he will use it for your good, to keep you, to guide you, to give you what is best, what he knows to be best; and has, as such, appointed for you in his wise counsel and purpose of grace. Leave yourself, then, to his care and management; yourself and your's. Trust him for a pastor. Faith is the best way to get one. Ask of him, believing, and Mr. ——, or some you never heard of, shall be sent. Believe for your mercies, and you cannot want your mercies. If you take notice of God's dealings, you will find, *That God never takes away what you are enjoying by*

faith. All things are possible, both to get and to keep, to him that believeth. And when belief goes, all goes. And well it is so: for that which is not enjoyed by faith is not worth enjoying. It can bring no real good to us, and no glory to God; therefore we had better be without it. In this holy art of believing for our blessings, I wish you most heartily a great proficient. Faith alone makes the difference. I would have you daily to practise it for every earthly good thing you enjoy; then shall it produce a gladness of heart—but without faith it will not be to your true solid comfort, because not sanctified. You see how open I write, my very heart appears. For I know your weak side. There I fear for you; and my fear is a holy fear. I fear for God's glory, in the use of a comfort so near your very soul, and I know of no way but what I now tell you. *Believe for your mercies.* That will secure God's honour, and your comfort. To the sweet arms of your divine lover I commend you and your's, that he would give you grace to

trust all your earthly comforts daily in the
Saviour's care. This I shall entreat for
you, being very heartily your's in that
loveliest of all loves,

W. R.

LETTER XXVII.

Blackfriars, Oct. 27, 1769.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

FINDING the cover of this letter yesterday, it put me in mind of our past correspondence, and brought back into pleasing reflection many agreeable interviews with you and your's; I was resolved therefore to make use of this cover. Providence, I thought, had put it in my way. It is to be sent as directed, to be a witness for me of my constant attachment to you and your family, as of my uninterrupted affection. Go, letter, and say so. Assure them, that I am still the same in heart, in deed, wishing and praying to approve myself to be unfeignedly theirs. And tell them my reason; it is because, through

grace, I am the same in heart, in deed, to my spiritual FRIEND; wishing and praying to approve myself to be unfeignedly his in all things. Upon better acquaintance, I am become settled in my love, and rest in it. I have some little intimacy with the Friend of Sinners, and what he manifests to me of himself increases affection. He teaches me to loathe myself; every day he lets me see and feel the total ruin of this body of sin and death, and will not let me look at any thing in or of myself, from whence I may draw one moment's comfort. Thus he makes himself more lovely. Self-loathing renders him precious. The more we grow out of self, the more we grow into Jesus. Tired of our works and duties, we learn to value his righteousness. Feeling we cannot keep ourselves, we know how to trust his faithfulness, who hath undertaken to keep his people unto the end. O what a friend is this! whose love is like himself; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. This sense of his love makes his people loving.

And his love to them is the bond of all their holy love to one another. Having put on Christ, they put on with him kindness, brotherly love, bowels of mercies, &c. Some of these, but I do not boast, I feel to you, and my dear friends with you. May our love be mutual, increasing continually in every sweet and holy affection. The love of Christ will constrain to this; it spreads like leaven. Every act not only brings forth, but also diffuses, its sweet influence. Whenever I remember you, and make mention of you at our court, the king not only hears, but approves, and makes the love expressed to be love abounding. The holy flame spreads as it burns; so that every affection, as it increases in its attachment to our glorious Head, makes us more truly loving to all his members.

My dear friend, I wish you was more intimate with this loving Jesus. And why not? What has he done to make you shy of him? All your complaints about yourself are no bar: they are so many ties and

bonds, constraining you to love him ; yea, he will love to hear them from you, as matters of faith. Whatever you are, or feel of sin, misery, helplessness, &c. if rightly managed, should increase your knowledge of and dependance on the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, all that you meet with, till you meet him face to face, should bring you into more experience of his perfect salvation, and of his free love to bestow it on such as you ; by which means you would be growing daily in the excellency of the knowledge of *your* Lord, and would be more conformed to his image and example. May you and I increase daily in this heavenly friendship, and love him in our measure, as he loved us. I am just returned from a journey of seven hundred miles ; ashamed and confounded at his mercies to me and mine ; and yet to pour my praises to his grace, so mean my services in his own work, that I am forced to cry for mercy on my best sermons and labours. I am returned home self-abased, carrying this truth written on my heart,

and desiring to manifest it in outward conversation: Let him that glorieth, glory ONLY in the Lord JESUS. I saw Lady H—, who was pure and well, and preached at her chapel at Bath: she had not received satisfactory, or I think she said no answer at all from the Lord Chancellor; but he must give such an answer as our Lord Chancellor pleases. That's our comfort: my love to Mr. ———. I am going to pray for him. All covenant blessings be with you and your's. The Lord spare —— for his mercies sake; I don't know what you would all do, if he who gave him was to take him away; and remember, he has a right to do it when he will. Farewel, farewel. I am your's in our dear Lord and keeper,

W. R.

LETTER XXVIII.

May, 1768.

THANK you, my good friend, for remembering me. I began to have some hard thoughts of you, but they are gone: time has taught me, that old friends are better than new, and grace has improved this experience: for friends in Christ will be so for ever. We *may* part, but only to meet again. Love can reach from London to ——; yes, a great way farther. I feel my heart just now united to ——, and rejoice from my soul that Jesus has taken her up to himself: thanks be to him for the grace she had, and the glory she had received out of his fulness. Blessings on him, that we are going the same way, to meet our best friend, and all our friends; and to be with him our heaven-making Jesus, and to be with them for evermore. I was led from

reading your letter to a very comfortable view of the Prince of Life. I thought I saw him, in that character, exceedingly amiable and glorious; and the more I considered it, the more lovely it grew to the eye of faith. For it seemed to me that sin and death came into the world with all their train of evils, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. *Wonderful* is his name, who can bring righteousness out of sin. What a miracle-working Jesus is he, who can make life out of death! Indeed, all he does is in this strange way, peculiar to himself, that *HIS* might be the crown of crowns. As a Jesus, he not only saves from the evil of sin and death, (this is the least part of his matchless work) but he also, in the free gift of his sovereignty, bestows righteousness and life; and, to the everlasting praise of his sovereignty, bestows them on the most unrighteous, and on the most dead in sin. In this praise, how glorious is our Jesus! My heart is now captivated with his inimitable loveliness, although I see him

through a glass darkly : what must he be in full and open view, when the display of his beauty will make an eternal heaven ! I knew one, who was admitted as that happy soul was, Cant. ii. 9. to see the divine lover looking forth at the window, and shewing himself, or, as it is in the margin, *flourishing*, opening and expanding like a flower his beauties and fragrance through the lattice window. It was a ravishing sight. If the eye and senses of faith can be thus highly delighted, what will it be to see him face to face, and to enjoy his fulness of glory ! since he thus, by the death of our friends, can let us behold some fresh discovering of his life-giving charms.—What—O what will it be to us, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life ! Yet a little, a very little while, and this shall be. In the meantime, may you and I be growing in the knowledge and love of the Prince of Life. I got a good advancement by the death of Lady M——t, and was led into a sweet path of meditation, in which I went on, meditating

and contemplating, till my heart burnt within me. Methought he had given a noble display of the riches of grace in his dealings with her, and had made her a happy partaker of that life which he came to give unto his world. You can witness that he had repealed the sentence of death. She was freed from condemnation, and was passed from death unto life. He gave her to know it, to enjoy it. Many a time my spirit has been refreshed with hearing her relate simply and feelingly how Jesus was her life. And in consequence of this, having peace with God, through Jesus Christ her Lord, she had an attachment to his person. You can tell, better than I can, how she shewed this. She was certainly spiritually alive, and he who made her so kept her so, to as great manifesting of his power as if he had preserved the burning bush in Horeb in flames, and yet unhurt, from Moses to this day. This spiritual life bodily death cannot touch, because it is rooted and grounded into the divine life. And the keeping of it is laid

up with Christ in God, safe, happy, out of the reach of storms and enemies. What did I say, bodily death cannot touch it? I retract that word: bodily death does what the angel did to Peter in prison; knocks off his fetters, and sets him at liberty; the angel of life takes down the mortal that he may perfect the immortal life, and so we die to live;—die to the world, to live with him; die to time, to live for ever; yea, die in faith, that this body of death which we leave behind us shall soon be raised to life and immortality. Is death our enemy? what has he done to hurt?—Only fulfilled the kind will of Jesus, who wanted her company, and would have her with him, to live as he does in his life of glory. Blessed death, heavenly comforter, thou art a loving friend, indeed, to Jesus's friends! Your letter was the means of my entering on this meditation, and blessed it was. O what a sight and sense had I of the incomparable grace of life-giving Jesus! While I am writing, he makes himself, beyond what any words can describe,

lovely to my eyes, and precious to my heart. He is my life. I find it, enjoy it, in him; and let me speak, my dear friend, a word for him to you: *for him*, as I am in duty bound—to *you*, as love constrains me. For him I speak a most complete, absolutely and eternally perfect Saviour; his person, his work, possessed of all the glories of the Godhead. What he did and suffered, in order that he might save to the uttermost, admits of no addition. It was once done and perfected for ever. My friend, have you the benefit of this? Do you enjoy it in your conscience? and there read, and there maintain, a full and everlasting repeal from the sentence of death. This is the honour Jesus claims of you, and it is the highest you can pay him. You can do him no greater homage, nor more acceptable worship, than to put your entire dependance, without any the least drawing back, or wavering, on his life and death, as your whole deliverance from sin and death, as your clear title to heaven and glory. When faith shews you the di-

vine majesty of Mary's son, and the everlasting honours of his obedience unto death, then will the peace of God rule in your heart, and thereby you will glorify the blood and the righteousness of the Redeemer, more than any angel, more than any happy spirit, around his throne.

The enemy long, too—too long kept me from that enjoyment, by wiles and snares, chiefly legal views and self-righteous plans. Still he now and then gets an advantage of me. But I beg, my friend, you would beware of his devices. Are you resting upon Jesus? and do you find the sentence of death is no longer in force against you? Read, study your Bible, pray and beg for an increase of faith. This is the use of all means. May the Lord the Spirit bless them to you! Faith is your shield against the accuser of the brethren, and against your own legal workings. If you grow in this experience, you will grow more and more alive to God; you will believe, and find more of the love of a reconciled Father. The

more you rest on the finished salvation, you will certainly abound more in the blessed fruits of it : such as, seeing yourself perfectly saved, your hopes will all cast anchor within the veil ; your affections will get fixed on their everlasting object, and you will come under the sweet government of King Jesus. Thus living *in* him, you will live *to* him, which is not only spiritual life, but is also, indeed, spiritual liveliness. And if you ever find this decay after you once had it, mind and attend to the cause of its decay, and you will see this was the only cause ; namely, your faith was therefore not lively, because you was not resting perfectly upon Jesus, as your Saviour from the sentence of death. This was the worm which eat into the gourd, and made it wither. Keep this out, it will flourish and grow as long as you have any need of faith for protection, or for happiness, and when the time comes, that faith is to be no more.—What is dying ? Is it not in the hand of Jesus ? Does not he appoint it, fix it, send it ? Has

not he promised to be with you in the hour of death, to keep you from the fear and from the power of it? Is not he faithful, almighty, all-loving? his love wants no power to make his promises good to his dying friends; yea, he does make them good every day. He will to you, doubt it not. I have written till my time is up. You are sure my subject is not exhausted; no, never will be. But I am forced to stop. My dear friend, pray for me. You know my profession of love for your soul. God knows my heart. Adieu.

W. R.

LETTER XXIX.

June 11.

THANKS to my dear friend for her last. It was a great refreshment to me. Oh, how does my spirit rejoice to see the blessed Jesus crowned and exalted in your soul, and no other name mentioned in your lips, no dependance upon any being or thing in your heart or life, but that God-man. This is the point. Here may we fix. But, alas! although I would fix, and never so much as turn my eye from hence, I find so many enemies within and without, that it's hard keeping our hold, and never letting it go. In this warfare the flesh and the Spirit fight without ceasing; the flesh against Christ's sufficiency, and the Spirit for him. But, thanks be to his grace, the

Spirit is almighty, and he has given the flesh in all believers a mortal wound, of which it will ere long bleed to death. And then, oh, blessed prospect, we shall see the Captain of our salvation, through whom we conquered, face to face! That's enough. There's heaven. May you and I, till we get there, learn daily to make more use of Christ. Our dear fellow soldier, lady H——n, fights bravely. She went to Brighthelmstone this day se'n-night. I had a sweet letter from her this morning. She is happy in the adorable Immanuel, and lives to him and for him. Her only view in Sussex is to carry his glad tidings to a wretched ignorant people. He has hitherto prospered her design, and, while he smiles upon it, I believe she will not give it up.

God willing, I shall leave London on the 20th of this month; but am not yet determined how I shall travel. In hopes of the pleasure of meeting you, I will trouble you with a line, as soon as I know whether I ride, or come in the coach, or

in a post-chaise. My dear, ever, ever
 dear Lord and Master keep you! To his
 sweet and tender heart I commend you,
 and am, for his precious name sake, your
 faithful friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER XXX.

Blackfriars, May 2, 1769.

I WROTE to my good friend at Christmas, and got an answer at Easter. Indeed, I began to think you had dropped me; for I make myself sure of nothing, but of my dear Lord's unchangeable love. Yet I corrected myself for thinking so of you: but I was tempted, and I have combustible enough to feed any, yea, every temptation. The Lord keep me from others, as he did from this.

You ask my opinion of inoculation. People, who reason upon worldly motives, may do as they please. To others I would relate the case of a great Doctor in divinity, and a great Christian, who had an only son. His wife was for, the Doctor

was against, inoculation. They had many disputes about it. The Doctor said he could not do it in faith—the wife said she could do it, because she believed it to be for the best. Neither side would yield: so they agreed to put it off till the one or the other should give up their opinion, and both be of one mind. The child was thus left in God's hand—he got the small-pox in the natural way, and did well.

I attend to your complaints of yourself. They are true. You might make a thousand more, and alike true. But, my dear friend; what of all this? Is not Jesus the Saviour of such sinners as you are? Pray, take heed of getting into a complaining temper, and contracting an habit of it; for there is no greater enemy to Jesus, to the growth of your communion with him, and to the liveliness of your heart towards him. I would have you sensible of all your causes of complaint, but satisfied under them, and willing to be just what you are. In this poverty of spirit, needy, sinful, helpless, dependant temper, con-

sists the very life of faith: for while you feel thus, every thing in you and about you says, "You must go to Jesus—you can do nothing without him—he must counsel, and strengthen, and comfort—he must save—he must be a Jesus to you every moment, and in every thing." What reply does the believer make?—"It is true, without him I can do nothing—I am helpless, and his strength is perfected in my utter weakness; most gladly, therefore, do I glory in my weakness, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me." O, for more of Paul's happy experience! He had no such gladness as that which arose from communion with Jesus, and he gloried in that which helped him to this communion, by making it absolutely necessary for him. He did not commit sin on purpose; but, being a sinner, he did not wish not to be one in himself: it was his joy, yea, his crown, of rejoicing that God-Jesus and sinful Paul were one. Here he found his heaven; Jesus was united to the sinner, as meat is to the

hungry; and Paul lived upon him, feasted on him, enjoyed Jesus, as the hungry do their meat. It was such a feast, that Paul would not wish to have no appetite, but rather to have it enlarged, that he might live more upon the bread of God, and grow up more into Christ Jesus.

What! must I always be this poor needy sinner? Yes; always, till you get into heaven. And then you will be perfectly humbled, and have nothing within you to rob Jesus of any part of his glory. All your salvation, from the councils of eternity to the eternal fulfilment of them, will then be made plain; you will see, confess, and be happy in confessing, that sovereign grace did all for you, and in you. And in the perfect sense of this you will triumph in being a SINNER SAVED, and in this you will triumph as long as heaven is heaven.

But thus you keep on complaining—
 “I find myself too often poring over my own inward sinfulness and misery, and consequently giving way to unbelief,

whenever my poor reason tells me I should be rejoicing in the God of my salvation." And what, then, unbelief is in you, felt or not; and unbelief given way to, is your burden—this makes for you. And it only proves that you are still at school, learning your second lesson, and that is, how the God of your salvation being received is to be enjoyed. You own he is received. You call him, the God of *my* salvation. Observe, my dear friend, now this Jesus is your's, ALL is your's. You have an undoubted right and title to Him, and to His—improve it, then, and make use of his fulness. Your estate is clear and boundless; you have only to receive the income of it in grace, as well as in glory. I pray you, my dear friend, to study this lesson, and if the Lord the Spirit help you to learn it well, it will save you from many an aching heart. Observe, Jesus is your's; after this, you are not to seek for any new title to any part of salvation. This is also secured; but you are called upon to enjoy the purchased salvation,

and to be a happy receiver out of the Saviour's fulness. Suppose you live thus ever so well, receive ever so much, what you enjoy in Christ is no part of your title to Christ; what you receive from Christ is not your title to pardon, to righteousness, or to holiness. He is received for these purposes — He, Christ himself; and your enjoying him for these purposes is not your title to pardon, &c. What Christ does for you, or in you, or by you, is not to be looked at so as not to look still simply at Christ himself. What he is, and what he did for you, here is all your salvation. What he does in you, or by you, here is the enjoyment of this salvation in its fruits and effects: but these fruits and effects do not make you holy;—oh, no, the poor beggars who are fed at our king's table will never say, we pay the king for our meat by eating a great deal; or, his meat feeds us, and therefore we make ourselves strong;—or, his grace nourishes us, and, therefore, we make ourselves holy. No, no; they

are taught better. They will always acknowledge—the more we receive out of the fulness of Jesus, we find ourselves more happy, and the fruits of our interest in him are more abundant to our comfort, and to his glory, but our debt increases; and the better we are fed and cloathed, and kept up with his royal bounty, he leaves us nothing to glory in, except his overflowing grace. In this spirit his people hear, and read, and pray, and attend means and ordinances; they do not seek holiness in these—not to be made holy by them—but they do attend in faith, sanctified first by the faith that is in Jesus, and in that faith enjoying him in all they do. Christ is my sanctification before I can do any thing aright, and what I do aright does not make me holy, but shews that I am holy. Every living branch is ingrafted into the root and stock of holiness, and its leaves and fruit do not make it to be in the vine, but only prove that it is in it. A member is not made living by doing its office. The eye does

not live by seeing, but it is a living eye, and therefore sees. You must be a living member in the mystical body, before you can do your office in it. Doing your office does not make you, but only shews that you are a living member. My dear friend, weigh these things well. I verily believe the Holy Spirit is now teaching you this lesson: for I see you cannot be content with yourself, nor your graces, nor gifts: improve this divine teaching, and learn to build all your hopes of holiness on Christ, made of God's sanctification for you. And the more clearly you believe this, you will love the God of your salvation more; your spiritual enemies will be more subdued, and in heart and life you will be more devoted to God, to his ways and will. I give you this advice from my own knowledge. Give me credit, and try, and you will soon find cause to give God his glory.

I hope to look upon you, and say on this subject more than I can on paper. Remember me in love and respect. The

good-will of your unchangeable Friend
be with you and your's, and me and
mine.

W. R.

LETTER XXXI.

Brighthelmstone, July 20.

JESUS be your's, all he is, and all he has. Then you will be as rich as an archangel. I hope he will be my guide, and bring me to — on Friday next, between one and two. I am not sure, because I have not taken a place in the stage, nor shall, till I go to London, which will be on Tuesday next. If I cannot come in the stage, perhaps I may see you before. We go on sweetly in this place. Christ is indeed exalted, and reigns glorious in many a heart, as I wish he may in your's. He does—but not as you could wish. May he captivate you more with his infinite beauty, and enable you to live more blessed upon his infinite fulness, that he may keep his royal court in your soul! The

more you are acquainted with him, you will grow in love; for he is altogether lovely; an immense ocean of everlasting love. The whole world is but a drop of his love—what must heaven be, where his love is to be glorified and enjoyed for ever! There we shall see him: oh, for that day! But even, by the way, as he walks with us, he makes our hearts burn within us. These sweet foretastes of his love draw us on, and whet an appetite. A few more of these, and we shall get to the fountain-head, and drink rivers of pleasure for evermore. To his precious dear heart's love I commend you and your's, and am for his sake your friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER XXXII.

SWEET Jesus be with my dear friend! I promised you a note as soon as I was determined what way I should travel. It is now fixed for the —— stage, in which, God willing, I shall reach —— on Friday, the 24th of this month, about 12 o'clock at noon, where I hope to see some faces from —— to rejoice my heart, with whom to talk a little of our time away about that dear, dearest of all dears; the only one worth talking about. I know not of any good use the tongue is at present, but to be telling of his salvation from day to day, in the praise of which salvation it will be employed for ever and ever. May your heart and mine be ever warm with his love, and then our tongues cannot help telling of what our hearts feel. To his precious love I commend you and your's, and am,

for the sake of that dear man of sorrows,
your friend and servant,

W. R.

P. S. Strange doings at ———! A party for me, another against me. Violent on both sides. Alas, alas! what's all this about? I sent word I should preach there on Sunday, the 26th; I know not whether they will let me: if they do, I hope you will mount me on that very quiet mare I heard of last year. But more of these things when we meet. Jesus be with you. Amen, Amen.

LETTER XXXIII.

Blackfriars, March 5, 1770.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I WAITED on —, and he told me he was to call at — in his way home. I could not resist the opportunity of sending in writing my thanks for your last kind letter. My heart rejoices, and is thankful for many things which you say in it, of your dependance on the finished salvation of Jesus, and of your desire to experience more of his graces and blessings. I see what stops you; the very same that stops me. And I would lay before you the gospel motives and encouragements to get on, revealed in the word, and I hope in some measure made useful to me by the Spirit of God.

I have remarked, in conversing with

you, and in all your letters, the workings of a legal and self-righteous temper, apt to nurse guilty fears, and to cherish misgivings and suspicions of your interest in the great salvation. The same are daily disturbing my peace, and are the very plague of my life. The only remedy against them is to look well to the conscience, where they have their rise, and to use all appointed means for establishing it in the peace of God. This is the main point. A holy walk, and successful warfare, depend entirely on the testimony of conscience. The believer's chief business is to learn to resist and to overcome guilt, fear, and unbelief, that these being kept out of his conscience, the peace of God may rule there always and by all means. Then it will be what the scripture calls *a good conscience*. And when this is good, all goes on well. Now, that is a good conscience which witnesses to the truth as it is in Jesus. Conscience, I suppose, is that faculty of the soul, which, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, compares the

sinner's heart and life with the holy law of God, brings him in guilty for transgressing its precepts, and leaves him under guilt and condemnation, to suffer its just penalties. The gospel sets forth to him an infinitely perfect righteousness, to satisfy the precepts; and an everlastingly sufficient atonement, even the sacrifice of Jehovah Jesus, to satisfy the penalties of the law. When he is enabled to believe in this righteousness, and in this atonement, his conscience is saved from guilt and condemnation; yea, it acquits and justifies the sinner, and brings in a true verdict for him. It says the same that God himself does; pleads its discharge from the express words of the great charter of grace, under the broad seal of heaven. With the royal grants and immunities therein graciously vouchsafed, it stops the mouth of unbelief. "Thou art freely forgiven ALL trespasses; thou art justified from ALL things; thou art a son of my love, and shalt be an heir of my glory: I, even I, the Lord God, am thine, and thou

shalt be mine for ever." Here the believer triumphs ; and why may not you and I, too ? I do, thanks be to Infinite grace. I believe these words on the testimony of God, as spoken to me. My conscience bears witness to the truth of the divine record. It is now a good conscience ; it agrees with God, and looks upon him as reconciled perfectly : it fears to dishonour him, by calling in question the infinite value of Christ's righteousness and atonement, or by doubting of their being mine, while I feel my want of them, and have any dependance upon them. Thus the peace of God **RULES**, takes the lead in the conscience, and subdues guilty fears ; rules **ALWAYS**. The covenant is like the divine covenants in the God-head, always the same ; the free grant of the righteousness and atonement of Immanuel always the same ; my want of them always the same ; and mine interest, though not in my sense, yet in God's purpose always the same. These gospel motives should teach you and me to maintain this peace always, and

BY ALL MEANS. Every thing should help to promote it. Corruptions, enemies, temptations from every quarter, should, by all means, establish our hearts in the peace of God: we should be trying at it, fighting for it; and, as it is our privilege, we should never yield, but fight hard to keep a conscience void of offence. This is warring a good warfare when we hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.

Believe me, my dear friend, the management of your conscience is the first and great lesson in the school of Christ. And your chief mistakes and falls come from its not being governed by the Word and Spirit of God. Look to it, then, and hear, and read, and pray, and walk; that the testimony of your conscience may be agreeable to the truth, as it is in Jesus. Insomuch, that, when you feel any thing wrong, when you are low in spirits, your sins displease, your duties cannot please you, you should remember that these very things, rightly managed, will establish your conscience in the peace of God; be-

cause they will bring you to live entirely by the faith of the Son of God. Every new day you live to learn from them, that you have nothing to trust to but the righteousness and the atonement of Jesus ; and, therefore, depending on this sure foundation, you may safely build your hopes of God's being in friendship with you, yea, in an unchangeable and everlasting friendship. O that your heart may be sprinkled from an *evil* conscience ; and mind, that is an *evil* one, which, through unbelief, refuses to build its peace upon the life and death of Immanuel. And that is a *good* conscience, which has peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord, and expects all the love of the Father to come freely through his Son. This is the second lesson in the school of Christ—
“ How shall the heart be made and kept happy in the love of God ? ” I answer, by believing that he is perfectly reconciled, and loves you. While there is guilt in the conscience, and you look upon the law broken, the punishment deserved, and the

almighty Judge engaged to inflict it, you can no more love God than you can love pain. But when you hear the gospel preaching peace by Jesus Christ, and can mix faith with it, then God is discovered as related to you in the closest bond of love, even your dearest friend, your most loving Father; which will draw out the affections of your heart to him: "For we love him, because he first loved us." His love is first, your's is second: his is the cause, your's is the effect. He enables you to believe his love to you, and that excites your love to him.

You see, then, how much depends upon the testimony of the conscience. When this is on Christ's side, and bears a faithful witness for him, then your heart will be happy; you will have joy and peace in believing. "God is reconciled to me; he is my God; we are agreed, and now we walk together. He bids me call him FATHER; and I know he has bowels of love and fatherly affection for me: he sees me, accepts me in Jesus, and rests in his love to me.

My title is clear to all spiritual blessings ; because, God being my God and Father, ALL things are mine."

If you live like a Christian, these should be the constant breathings of your heart. Your happy walk depends entirely on the belief of God's being perfectly reconciled to you in his Son. And, therefore, you should not be aiming at getting any new title to your heavenly Father's love, but at new enjoyment. *All* is your's in title ; but you are to seek for more, still more possession : every day you should be seeking to believe more, to enjoy more of the riches of your Father's love in Jesus. And nothing will stop your growing enjoyment, if the peace of God rule in your heart always, and BY ALL MEANS.

My dear friend, attend closely to this : for want of it, O what sad mistakes have I made ! You will always find, when your heart departs from the Lord, that there has been some guilt laying upon the conscience, and representing God to you in some other light than as your most lov-

ing Father. But, pray mind, he has always the affection, as well as the name. He changeth not in his love. He is to all his children ever of one mind. And, therefore, when you desire to enjoy his love, and in the enjoyment of it to find your heart happy, look at nothing to bring you to the Father but the Son. Read your share in his love, take possession of it, for nothing done in you, or by you, now, or at any time, but only *in* and *for* the salvation of Jesus, in whom his Father is your Father. Thus walk with him; making Christ your way, and Christ your end. Keep walking on, leaning upon Christ every step for strength, for victory over all corruptions and over all enemies, which would try to stop you from the enjoyment of your Father's love. Trust in Christ for all the blessings of it, for every thing that can keep you safe, and make you happy all your way: and depend upon it, through Christ, you will find the company and presence of your God and Father a very heaven here, as well as in glory.

Mrs. ———, would you daily walk with a happy heart? Then you must learn to make up all your happiness in the love which the Father bears to you in his dear Son. This is to be all your salvation, and all your DESIRE. You must look quite away from your graces, your gifts, your duties. God does not love you *for* these: he loves you in his Son; and you, in believing this, are to exercise your graces and gifts, and to be found in the way of duty, that you may have fellowship with him in his love.

This is the hardest task of all. I find it so to this day, and I know your temptations; therefore I would finish this long scrawl with an account of the influence of the former truths. Get a ready answer to this question, “How are my tempers to be regulated, and my conversation to be so ordered, that I may, night and day, enjoy the peace and the love of my reconciled God and Father?” The way is, *to walk humbly with YOUR God*. Do not disown what the Holy Spirit has taught you:

give him the honour of his own grace : he has, indeed he has, learnt you to say, Abba, Father. God is *your* Father in Jesus. Walk humbly with him as such ; so will you enjoy his sweet peace, and partake of his happy love. While these rule in the conscience and in the heart, the tempers opposite to them will be resisted and overcome. The Divine teacher will discover the secret workings of guilt and unbelief, and keep them from destroying the peace of conscience. By his almighty grace he will mortify carnal affections, and crucify every idol-love : he will preserve the heart, as a chaste virgin, for its heavenly LOVER. Rebel nature will resist, yea, always ; but it cannot overcome the Lord God omnipotent : he *will* bring all things into subjection to himself. He *will* ; nay, let me say, he *has*. I appeal to yourself. Speak out for God. Does not your conscience say, “ I have nothing to do with any pretences to be my own saviour ; the righteousness of Jesus, and his atonement on the tree, are all my salvation ? ”

Does not your heart say (I am sure I have heard you say), “This is all my desire?” Do not your hopes say, “We have cast our anchor upon Jesus; thank God, we can never be disappointed?” Do not your fears say, “I would not for the world do any thing to displease my God and Father. Blessed Spirit, rule in me, rule over me, mortify the old man, and quicken the new man day by day?”

Since God has done all this for you, O do not dishonour his work by hearkening to proud self, the old man of sin, who is ever reasoning within you against the glory of Divine grace. He would have you to look at yourself, and to draw your safety and happiness from some pleasing views of your own goodness. He will be always tempting you to this: but remember, that you are not to look at or to depend in the least upon yourself, but wholly upon God reconciled in Jesus. Whatever is your own, and comes from self, is to shew you the necessity of *walking humbly with your God*. Do not you feel to this hour, that

self is made up of sinfulness, wants, temptations, and miseries? None of these should stop you, but each should help to make you walk more humbly with your God. They are to shew you your constant need of salvation, and to keep you always dependant on God for it. No failings in duty, no sense of in-dwelling sin, no weakness, no opposition, should separate you in conscience or heart from your reconciled God, but should bring you to walk in nearer fellowship with him: by which alone you will enjoy more conformity to him. Pride will be hid from you. Every high thought will be brought down: grace, sovereign grace, will reign. And the Lord will receive ALL, I am sure it is his due, ALL the glory.

Here is a wide field before me; but I stop. When you send me word that you have learnt so to manage the weapons of your warfare as to be able to maintain peace in your conscience, and happiness in your heart, and victory in your tempers and walk, then I will take up the subject

where I leave off, and go on with it. In the mean time, remember this great truth, God is *your* Father in Jesus; you know it by faith; yea, you enjoy the comforts of it; and, therefore, the end of your walk is not to procure a title to your Father's love, but to maintain the enjoyment of it. May the Lord the Spirit make you a happy partaker of it every day more abundantly!

I hear of the goodness of our dear Lord to ———. I bless him from my heart for her. May she never want his rich cordials to comfort her soul as long as she has a body of sin and death to struggle with! My respects to all that family. May God sanctify the present dispensation to every one of them!

My kind love to Mr. ———, and to Mr. John, and every good wish for that favourite child. He grows a fine boy, and says many pretty things. Take care, my friends, of your hearts; he has rather too much room in them. Grow in love to the Giver as you grow in love to him, and all will be well.

Recommend me to Mr. B—y; beg him for Jesus's sake to put up prayers for a cumberer of the ground. I am sure I do not forget him. May he never forget me before a throne of grace.

See how I scribble on. Throw a veil of love over all, and believe me to be in bonds, never to be broken, tied by the hand of Jesus, your friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER XXXIV.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I HAVE many reasons to remember your being last year at Bath. Among other things I sent you down the first lesson, which the great and good Master teaches all his scholars. I cannot tell how well you learned it. But I understand he is very kind to you, and is taking a great deal of pains to make you a proficient. He sees how desirous you are of going to heaven, with this and the other comfort by the way : you are apt to think, as I do, that, being such an infinitely loving Lord, he might very well spare it to you—you might keep it, and yet keep his love. But herein we form a wrong judgement of him. For he does

all things well—yea, he intends to do better for you, far better than you can even imagine. He loves you, more than you can possibly love yourself; and he will send you nothing but what is for your real and best interest, and he will let you find it so. His love is almighty, and it is unchangeable. What cannot he do, what will he not do, when his heart is set upon blessing his people? It is a common thing with him to bring spiritual good out of temporal evil: he can extract pleasure out of pain; yea, he can enrich by impoverishing, and turn losses into gain. Unto you it is now given, as a matter of his choice favour, not only to believe on him, but also to be conformed to him, by bearing HIS cross. This he is aiming at. He is going to advance you to great honour, and to make you comforted on every side. At this very time, he is training you up for it. He is now going to confer some of his special mercies, some of the greatest blessings he has to give on earth: which he bestows in so certain and fixed a way, that I know his

mind and will concerning you, as plainly here in London as if I was with you at ———, and you was to tell me all your thoughts: for, indeed, our Jesus is very communicative. He keeps nothing from his friends.—“And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” &c. Gen. xviii. 17, 18, &c. No. He is of my court, and I will make him of my cabinet: Abraham shall be my privy counselor. And the same Lord has raised you and me to the same dignity. Thus our patent runs:—“Henceforth I call you not servants: for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you FRIENDS, therefore all things which I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” Our divine Teacher still makes known to us what he doeth. He reveals his will, and lays open his heart. And, according to what I have discovered of it, your second lesson is this. May he breathe upon it by his Spirit, and bless to your soul every line you read. O that all within you may say, from a feeling submis-

sion to his loving correction—**LORD JESUS CHRIST, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE !**

The second lesson of the cross—or the exercise of faith in suffering.

1. They that have their portion in this life prosper in the world, they increase in riches, they come into no misfortune like other folk, neither are they plagued like other men.

2. But whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

3. He dealeth with them as with sons, having chosen them all in the same election of grace, prepared for them the same inheritance, and decreed that they should go the same way to it.

4. He will not exempt one of them, no, not his only begotten Son, who went to his crown carrying his cross ; and whom the Father did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.

5. Of this he has graciously forewarned

them, that they might not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try them, as though some strange thing had befallen them : he has also promised to be with them, when they walk through the fire, and they shall not be burnt, neither shall the flames kindle upon them. And,

6. When they come out of the furnace, they shall find many blessed fruits of righteousness, which could not have grown or been ripened by any other means.

7. Art thou, then, O my soul, expecting the cross as thy portion, prepared to take it up as the honourable badge of thy discipleship, and ready to carry it daily, following Jesus?

8. Canst thou take it up in faith? Is this the right frame of thy heart, “ God is my God, my Father in Jesus? He loves me with an unchangeable love, which influences all his dealings with me, and especially his present dispensation : for,

9. “ He not only loves me with an everlasting love, but he is also now waiting to communicate it to me : my present cross is

his way and means of bringing it to my heart, and of bestowing on me some of its richest blessings."

10. True, it is painful to the flesh; but the flesh fighteth always against the Spirit, and is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be; and therefore the cross must be laid and must be kept upon it, in order to weaken its power, and also to strengthen the new man day by day.

11. There is a *needs must* for the daily cross to keep down pride, and to bring every high thought of SELF into a subjection to Christ Jesus, that we may be always learning of him to be meek and lowly.

12. Looking at the cross in this light, as the loving appointment of the Father's will, and as the means of improving faith in the Son's salvation, through the grace of the eternal Spirit, how dost thou, O my soul, find it when it comes?

13. How is it with thee when the cross is upon thy back, and thou art carrying an heavy painful load after Jesus?

14. Dost thou see Him before thee, who

went in the same way ; and dost thou honour his promises, and rely upon his faithfulness to carry both thee and thy cross ?

15. When thou art chastised, and sharply, canst thou kiss the rod, and bless the kind hand which takes such pains to purge out thy corruptions ?

16. And when the smart continues from day to day, dost thou so far profit from it as to be able to say from thy very heart, **FATHER, THY WILL BE DONE ?** Happy soul ! for then thou art a partaker of his holiness.

17. When it is the will of the Father to spare the child, what profit has appeared, after he has removed the cross for a time ?

18. Are there any peaceable fruits of righteousness growing or ripening in the heart ? Is there more joy and peace in the Son's salvation, and more happy enjoyment of the Father's love ?

19. Has the Holy Spirit deadened the life of sense, by putting the cross upon it, and thereby produced more liveliness to spiritual and to eternal things ?

20. Say, is the harvest good and plentiful? Do the graces flourish? Have faith and patience been in exercise, and improved? Has resignation to the Divine will been in practice, and the good of submitting to it learnt by experience?

21. Thrice happy soul to whom the cross is thus sanctified! yet a very little while, and faith and patience having done their perfect work, the cross will be no more, but the crown will be for ever.

My very dear friend, this is my present lesson; and though I am a dull scholar, yet I get on a little. I wish you may get before me; for I am told the Master takes great pains with you; and I believe it. I am very certain you must carry your cross all the way through this valley of Baca. And what can I wish you better than that you may find the rain filling the pools, and you may go from strength to strength? When the Lord strikes at your comforts (and mind, your cross grows out of your comforts), O that your heart may then feel submission, whatever nature feels! May all

within you, guided and strengthened by grace, be able to say, Lord, take away what thou wilt, only take not away the light of thy loving countenance. When thou removest any of my comforts, let me not forget they were thine; thy free gift, lent me by thy love, and kept long for me by thy bounty. And now thou art pleased to require them, Lord, make thy will mine, and fill up the place which they had in my heart with thy precious love. So be it, Lord Jesus. Amen.

W. R.

LETTER XXXV.

November 14, 1770.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

SINCE last Thursday I have been in your service, heartily in it. I cannot charge myself with any neglect: and I went on more cheerfully, because I thought it was my dear Master's work, which made it pleasant. But when I heard the living was last night given to a Mr. —, judge what a blow this was; I felt exceedingly for you. I thought of Mr. M—, and the poor people at K—, deprived of the greatest blessing short of heaven. O my friend! indeed I was grieved sore, and began to complain and murmur—"Why could not the Lord have given his people a pastor after his own heart? Would it not have been for his glory? Are there not many

precious souls in and about K—— who will now want their daily bread?" Thus my heart was grieved; and it went even through my reins: so foolish was I, and ignorant. But I am recovered, and got into my right mind. Now I confess the Lord reigneth. He can make no mistake in his government. He does all things well, both for his own glory, and for his people's good. Mr. B——'s removal, a poor dead stick in his room, the joyful sound heard no more in K——, the mourners going about wringing their hands in the streets, &c. &c. &c. put as many more complaints as you please, yet every one of them shall be made to work together for good. He has said it, and shall he not do it? yes, he will do it; and you shall know it, too. This very visitation shall be over-ruled to bring about many gracious purposes, perhaps such as these:

First, a submission to his sovereign will; that you may say, ALL IS WELL.

Secondly, self-examination: was it not for my fault, my not valuing, not being

thankful for, not improving the blessed gospel, that the Lord has removed our candlestick?

Thirdly, living upon Jesus more. When the streams dry up, then people are forced to go to the fountain-head: so the means failing, his people must live upon the Lord of all means.

Fourthly, living more upon the word. If it cannot be heard, blessed be God, it may be read: prize it, meditate on it, lay it near your heart. May it be as sweet as honey, and as precious as gold, yea, as much fine gold. One single sermon to an hungry soul will be as blessed as ten thousand to one who has no appetite.

Fifthly, trust the Lord for making an opening for the gospel, even at K——, in his own way. You cannot see how: why, then, that's the time to trust, pray, believe, wait. For,

Sixthly, If the shepherd has any of his flock at K——, which I cannot doubt, then they cannot perish for lack of knowledge.

He will either send the gospel to them, or them to it.

I own it is a trying time. If I was in your circumstances, I should want all that can be said to make me think the Lord was doing right; and, therefore, my dear friend, I would lead you to some comfortable view of this matter. The blessed God enable you to give it up to him, and in patience to possess your soul! If your private loss be very distressing, try to divert the grief, and look at the public loss. O what has the church suffered in the setting of that bright star which has shone so gloriously in our hemisphere! Mr. Whitfield's preaching is over; now he is praising. We have none left to succeed him: none of his gifts, none anything like him in usefulness. But the same glorious Jesus who gave him to us has taken him away. If he wants another such, he can make him out of a stone. Well, then, let us submit: let him alone, let him alone. His interest at K——, his interest in Eng-

land, is as dear to him as the apple of his eye. He is managing all for the best. May you and I bow the knee, and say, *Thy will be done.*

I have no more time but to follow this letter with my prayers, that the great Head of the church may teach you practically what I have been mentioning; and depend upon it, a day will come when you will see this was right. Only wait; blessed are they that wait for him. Farewel, my good friend, and believe me to be your's in that dearest, sweetest Jesus,

W. R.

LETTER XXXVI.

Nov. 27, 1770.

DEAR FRIEND,

I HOPE we are not going to try our skill at saying fine things in the way of complimenting: I confess myself to be a malevolent creature, and have no good, and do no good, but from mere grace. Let IT have all the glory. It's true, my heart is in the affair of K——, but I need not tell you, at this time of day, how much I am interested in the welfare of you and of your's. At present, it wears a promising aspect. This morning I breakfasted with my Lord C—r— S—— and Lady. They do not see you have the least reason to doubt but in a short time Mr. B— will be vicar of K—, and they said many kind things of you and your

family. I long for the day when my letter is to be directed to the Rev. Mr. B—, vicar of K—. It cannot be far off, if the Commissioners' calculation be true, that they have had a living vacant every fortnight and two days.

You cannot think how much I felt myself obliged to Mr. ——— for his very kind letter. I know he does not love writing, which made it more acceptable. I beg my sincere respects to him. The matter must rest as it is, till there be a vacancy. The Lord will give you WAITING faith; it is the strongest faith of all! And you will have this, and every thing needful, if you continue asking in that dear name, which carries all causes in the court of heaven. O keep on praying. I do love these meetings of prayer. The living of K— was actually given away. The presentation was signed, and yet Mr. S— cannot get it. Your prayers have prevailed. If ever there was an answer to prayer, this is. O that God may make it an encouragement to all of you to pray

without ceasing! I am sure it has done me good, and opened mine eyes to see more of the glory of a prayer-hearing God.

Excuse my going on; my time is not mine own; I have lent it to the public, till this book of the *Walk of Faith* comes out. It was to have been about the size of the *Life of Faith*, but is already got much larger. My friends, who have seen it, won't let me abridge it, but say I must add a little more, and it will be two small volumes. My dear friend, pray for it. May God make it a sweet savour of his adorable name! It is a book of many prayers, and is the life and character of your's, in Jesus,

W. R.

My wife thanks Miss B—— for her polite letter. The civilities she received were very hearty and sincere. As my wife was but poorly all the time they were in town, it is very kind in Miss B—— to look upon them in so favourable a light.

My love to the Rev. Mr. B——— : I am also overpaid by his note ; so we need say no more of that. I desire to share in his prayers, and do very particularly beg him to ask for a blessing upon my little books : they have been very much blessed to the author. May the same blessing attend all that read them ! Mr. M—— is in my prayers. My love to Miss W——. I desire to be remembered to Mr. John, and to all the M——s. My blessing on that dear boy ! God bless him !

LETTER XXXVII.

Dec. 13, 1770.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been offering up my thanks and praise to the loving Head of the church for bringing this matter to an happy issue. Glory be to him, his delays were not denials. He only wanted us to take it from his hands, as his gift, and therefore he laid difficulties in the way. When faith was tried, he removed them. Every thing is at last ended favourably. The presentation is sealed, and is safe in my study. Although I have been more than a little hurt by dancing attendance here and there, yet now I seem ready to do a thousand times more to oblige such dear friends. You have it in your power to

reward me a thousand fold. Lay out your thanks in prayers for me and mine; and especially for my little book, which is swelled now into two volumes. It is a child of many prayers; I scarce ever sit down to write, without asking a blessing upon every line. Beg it may come out with the unction of the Spirit, and carry, wherever it goes, a sweet savour of the precious name of my Lord and my God.

I would rejoice with Mr. M—, and inform him, that he must not fail to write a short letter of thanks to my Lord C——r B——, expressing his great obligations to him for keeping the living of K—— vacant, till the Rev. Mr. S— was provided for; acknowledging how much he is beholden to him; and desiring to express it on all occasions. I mentioned, in my letter of yesterday, the necessity of writing to my Lord C——r S—.

My kind love to my dear brother, the vicar of K——: I wish he may lie low in the dust, as unworthy, utterly unworthy, of this great trust committed to him.

But there is grace sufficient in Jesus; I wish he may live on that, and do all in his parish in a settled dependance on the assistance of the great Head of the church.

My prayer is for the family of the B—s, that this may be a favourable providence for them all; may the Miss M—s enjoy present and eternal salvation by means of it. But why do I leave out Mr. I—? Why, indeed? May his heart leap for joy at the good news out of Mr. B—'s mouth, and children yet unborn bless God for this happy event!

My dear Miss W—r will be among the foremost. O let him have his glory! pray, let there be a public thanksgiving. If I was at K—, I would preach on the occasion, and recommend praise to a prayer-answering God. I wish you a warm Christmas, and warm hearts; I am sure they ought to be so; and may you and your's rejoice in the glad tidings of the birth of our dearest Immanuel! Continue your prayers for your servant in Jesus.

The Lord keep Mr. —, and be his
 Jesus in the evening of his life, and his
 strength in age, and his comfort in weak-
 ness. So prays

W. R.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Blackfriars, Dec. 27, 1770.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING an opportunity of sending a line in Mr. B—'s trunk, which I had out of Mr. Whitfield's study, I could not help wishing you a happy new year. Happy in Jesus; happy in growing intimacy with him. I have enjoyed a little of it, and it is, indeed, heaven upon earth. O for more of it at K—— in seventy-one than ever before!

Acquaint dear Mr. I—m, that, at last, with great difficulty, I have settled this affair. Christmas is a casting-up time with booksellers. The whole of what I have paid is only a small sum.

Expect peace only a little while. You see, lest you should be lifted up above

measure, thorns grow with roses. One, two, three trials, come along with the good news of success about K——. It is not your rest. Thank God, it is not. You are not at home. Get ready to go when your Father calls for you. Somebody must follow Miss B——. Who can tell, but God, whether it is you, or some of her sisters? O be prepared! The door is open, step into the ark; there death cannot hurt or frighten. St. Dunstan calls!—farewel. Blessings on you and your's. Thank Mr. M—— for all his kind expressions. I give them their value. Pray for your's in Jesus,

W. R.

LETTER XXXIX.

March 30, 1771.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ALTHOUGH I have but time to write a line, yet I could not longer forbear acknowledging your favour. My whole time has been employed this Lent with preaching and printing. My first volume is finished, and I hope to send you one by Mr. I—m, who is in town. The report of my mother's death is true: she is gone a little before, and I shall soon follow. The goodness of God to her was very great all her life, but extraordinary to the moment of her death; so that we sorrow rejoicing. I really thank you for interesting yourself in any of my concerns. As to my usual summer journeys, one great motive has ceased: I can say nothing at this distance of time.

I leave the Lord to plan for me; and I wish to follow no will but his. Where I shall go next summer, I have not so much as an hint yet.

My kind love to your Vicar; I hear good of him. The Lord bless him in all his designs for the glory of Jesus! I desire to be remembered by you in all your prayers. Every good wish I heartily offer for Mr. —. I am your's, in Jesus,

W. R.

LETTER XL.

Aug. 20, 1771.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE sent you in a parcel, directed to your brother I——, three volumes of the second part of the *Walk of Faith*, as before, unbound, with one set bound for yourself, another for Miss W——r, a third for the Rev. Mr. B——: they come to K—— with many prayers. I have prayed it over in writing; and I am daily begging the free Giver of every good and perfect gift that he would go out with it, and own it to the hearts of his dear people. My design in writing the book was for his glory, and their good. The plan is simple. It was to shew, that Christian principles are sufficient for all the purposes of Christian practice; so that whenever we fail in

practice, we have first failed in principle. How should it be otherwise, since the principles are MIGHTY THROUGH GOD?—The same grace, which teaches them, as the truth of God, gives also the experience of them, as the power of God. If, therefore, peace rules the conscience and love in the heart, the effect will follow, as light does when the sun is risen. There will be a dependance on the promised power of God to do and to suffer his will; and this power will as certainly be put forth as God is true; so long as peace and love are maintained. Try yourself. Observe narrowly how it is that you fail in practice; and you will always see your faith give way, and you was not living up to your privileges. I know not how I have succeeded in describing this grand mistake in the Christian walk, or in rectifying it; but this I know well, that the salvation of Jesus is absolutely, infinitely, everlastingly perfect in every part, and at the very given moment, and the belief of it will produce an even, holy, happy walk; and if this be-

lief was perfect (as it should be), an enjoyment of this salvation would be upon earth what it is in heaven. I pray God to carry you and me on from faith to faith, that we may daily bring greater honour to his word, and to his work.

If any light, or love, or joy, warm your heart in reading, remember me. My trials are very great. I have the old burden very heavy indeed—a vast body of sin, under which I groan, and great bodily pain, hard to bear. I have been to the sea for relief; but my Lord thinks proper to refuse it. When I had other trials, he spared me, and never let me know what bodily pain was: but, now outward trials are in a great measure removed, this is my cross. He is merciful in all his dealings: blessings on him for his *kind* rod! You will find in the second volume a chapter on the outward cross, and another on the inward: they are the longest chapters, because I felt what I wrote, and because all God's children carry these two crosses to the grave. I beg your attention to the

inward cross, and, when you have read the chapter, be so good as to tell me *how you like it*. To manage it well, is the greatest lesson in the school of Christ: O that he may teach you, as you read, and be your prophet, to enable you to live upon him as your priest!

Many years ago I chose my motto—**CEASE** ye from **MAN**.—You see how needful it is. Place your happiness on any thing but the heavenly Lover, it makes itself wings, and flies away. How many sweet hours (the remembrance is sweet) have I spent at K—! Yearly visits, pleasing and profitable; but I am debarred this enjoyment. I must learn my motto in an instance of hard self-denial. Happy for you and for me if every such disappointment lead us nearer to God. I beg your daily remembrance, as you are in mine—Every good wish to Miss W—r, and desire her acceptance of a bound set. My kind respects to Mr. M—. I wish Mr. J— may *walk* with us in our way, and all his sisters. I wish that little dear, dear boy,

does not get some of Christ's place in your heart: God bless him, and make him a comfort to you! Write my motto upon his forehead, and remember it, whenever you look at him. My love to Mr. I—m. May every blessing of the everlasting covenant be your's on earth and heaven! So prays your's, in Jesus,

W. R.

LETTER XLI.

February, 1772.

My dear friend has been thinking—"Well, I could not have expected such neglect; a letter sent in October, and not answered in January; I am surprised what can be the meaning of it!" I answer, to my shame, that I am grown very lazy, and good for nothing. It is high time I was dismissed from the vineyard; and any other master but mine would have had nothing to do with me long ago. I cannot but loathe myself, and stand wondering daily at his kindness. Never was self lower, and his loveliness higher, than in this new year. Worthless as I am, beyond all conception, yet he begun the year with vouchsafing me some delightful Pisgah-views. You must know it has been a custom with me for many years to have a

sermon on the New Year's Day, and to have the text of a sort of watch-word, something very short and striking, and which may serve the believers to feast upon a twelvemonth. I have found this very useful to myself, and so have others. Our text for 1772 was, CHRIST IS ALL. I send you some remarks, believing you will have fellowship with us in them, as you certainly have in that adorable Person of whom they treat.

Christ has all the fulness of salvation in him, as God-man; and he has it to the glory of the Father, and of the eternal Spirit: for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, as in the head for the use of his members. And it pleased the Holy Spirit to testify of his fulness in the scripture; and it pleases him by his grace to bring believers to use it, and to live upon it: and then they are truly converted. All other experience is not worth one farthing. The great work of the Holy Ghost is to pull down SELF, and to exalt CHRIST. This he does effectually, and this

he has done in you. Think what your debt is ; try to cast it up ; and send me the sum total. Say, how much do you owe to the Holy Spirit for enlightening your understanding, and convincing you that Christ is the one sun of the spiritual world. What a most blessed change has he wrought upon your mind ! He has stript you of the knowledge that puffeth up ; and has sent you to Christ, and to none but Christ, to be taught the things of God. He has brought you humbled to the Saviour's feet, where you are sitting among his lowest scholars (and that's the best place) to hear his words. Thus he has glorified your divine prophet in you ; and in the matter of teaching, he has made Christ your ALL. The Bible, and ministers, and means, have now got their right place ; they are subservient to Christ's teaching. He is exalted by your use of them : for you don't go to them, but to HIM in them, to receive lesson upon lesson, and line upon line. Thus may you and I be found waiting upon our great Lord and

Master through the year seventy-two !
 And when we thus put honour upon his
 office, and give glory to his teaching, we
 may expect to learn much of him : he will
 guide our feet in the way of peace : he will
 enlarge our faculties to know more of the
 wonders of his grace : and he will enable
 us to enjoy more of the heavenly sweetness
 of his precious love. Yes, Lord, we have
 great expectations from thee : thou canst
 teach us far more than we have yet learn-
 ed. O make us every day humbler scho-
 lars, that, whatever we learn, the praise of
 it may be thine, and our growth in saving
 knowledge may add to thy fame and re-
 nown !

Methinks I hear you ask—" But how
 shall I know for certain that I am one of
 Christ's scholars, and that he has indeed
 taken me into his tuition and teaching ?"
 My dear Madam, you are to know it from
 what you have learned of him. You can-
 not be certain of it any other way. He
 would have you to look at his revealed
 truth, and to try yourself by it. Has not

he made you wise in it unto salvation? O do, pray do, acknowledge what he has done for your soul. When you was sensible of your fallen state, in which you inherit a corrupt nature, and felt that in it you could do nothing but sin—when guilt was in your conscience, and fear was in your heart, what was it which brought you relief? To what did you look for pardon, and from whence did you expect peace with God? Your answer will shew whether you are Christ's scholar, and how far you have advanced in his school.

I can make your reply (for I have heard you say as much)—“Why, to be sure, I have no hope but in that offering WHICH PERFECTETH FOR EVER, and in that righteousness which justifieth from all things. This is my salvation—This, and nothing else—CHRIST IS ALL—I expect no pardon but in his blood—no justification but in his obedience—no safety but in his keeping me—no happiness but in his love—no heaven but in the enjoyment of Immanuel.”

Very well, this is a good confession. But who taught it you? Was it not Jesus, he who alone teacheth man saving knowledge? Has not he opened your eyes to see, and your heart to receive, those most blessed truths? Yes, he has. And do you praise him as he deserves? O no. A thought often comes into your head, “If I had learned those things of Christ, how could it be that I am so little and so seldom comforted by them? they are full of all consolation, and I am sometimes quite empty: how can this be?” I’ll tell you, my good friend. The very same thought comes into my head, and plagues me. But I get the better of it. Consider where it is written, *He that is comforted shall be saved!* You are called upon to trust the work of Christ, and to trust it for yourself upon the word of Christ. His work is your whole salvation: his word, and nothing in yourself. (Here I should stop. This is the end of my paper. But I cannot get done—you must let me finish my sentence, although it be to your cost.

Well, you'll forgive me, I hope, and therefore I proceed)—His word, and nothing in yourself, is to be your lawful warrant to call this salvation your own, and to use it for your own. Rest here, giving credit to the free promise of salvation to all that will receive it, and I'll lay my life of it you will not want comfort long. You will have God's faithfulness for your security that you are a saved sinner; and the belief of this cannot but bring peace and joy into your heart. According to your faith, so will your comfort be. But if you rest not here, get comfort where you will, it will not be true; it cannot be lasting. Not *true*; because all comfort dwells in Christ; every thing else is emptiness and vanity—Not *lasting*; because frames, feelings, habits, graces, joys, &c. &c. ebb and flow. Only Christ abideth the same for ever, and only his unchangeable word can fix your comfort. Trust it; make it your constant warrant to go to Christ for comfort, and he cannot deny his word: ac-

according to your faith, so will he give unto you.

Don't think, my good friend, I would have you to walk mourning and melancholy. No. There is nothing in Christ to make you so. He is all light, and life, and love, and joy, and that without ceasing; an infinite and everlasting fulness of all blessings. I would lead you to him in the direct road, which is to lead you out of self entirely. Christ is the way—look more at him, and less at self; trust more to him, and less to your faith or comforts; live upon nothing in yourself, but live every moment upon him; don't eye his gifts so much—fix your heart upon the giver; be always thinking of his fulness whenever you feel your own emptiness: whatever you are, or do, or suffer, let all things bring you to make (forgive me, I must go on: I take up another half-sheet, and I beseech you, again and again, let all things bring you to make) use of Christ. Read about him. Go to your closet to converse with him. Go to church to meet

him. Make him your companion. Accustom your mind to meditate upon him. Pray without ceasing to him as your bosom friend. Don't be shy of him ; he hates shyness. Draw near ; he bids you come with BOLDNESS, vile, unthankful, unprofitable, as you are : his dear heart is always open to hear your complaints, and to relieve your distresses, be they what they will. Remember, he is the Sun of *our* world, and you cannot be thus always in his presence without being enlightened by his rays and cherished with his warm beams. When any are very cold within doors, and see the sun shining sweetly, they don't use to ask, Is it *my* sun ? May I go out to walk in the noon-day brightness, and get myself warm in this delightful sun-shine ? Is it for me ? yes, make use of it, who will : it shines for you ; Christ is as freely your's as that sun-shine. You may walk in his light, and enjoy his comforts. You may take him for your righteousness, and your holiness ; you may live on him for grace and glory. He is

your's, and all he has is your's also, for your use to-day, and for ever.

Thus you see, my good friend, how we intend to live in London through the year 1772. CHRIST IS OUR ALL, not only in our title to salvation, but also in our present enjoyment of its blessings.—We expect a great income, and all from Christ. Our faith in him is not an empty notion (as the world thinks), but it is a reality. Christ is the substance; all besides is shadow; and by faith we now take possession of the substance. We live by him, and we live on him. We need envy nobody. What are princes to us? Our estate is vastly beyond theirs; the inheritance is sure; the riches unsearchable; and the income—ASK AND HAVE; and that increasing through eternity. O blessed, most blessed inheritance! The prospect is not like that of Moses. He only saw the country, but we go over Jordan. We, who have believed, do enter into rest. We are living in the land which floweth with milk and honey, which is the glory of

all lands. An heir of this country may live in the poorest cottage at K——, and yet be richer than a king. If he live this year, as he should do, by the faith of the Son of God, what are the riches of emperors compared to his? He can look into his title-deeds, and there read two clauses, which make him rich, even beyond conception; ALL THINGS ARE YOUR'S—AND YOUR'S FOR EVER.

I know what you will think, as well as if I heard you tell me your thoughts. I am acquainted with the vile suggestions of the enemy. He may tempt you to doubt of these truths, on account of your having still so many wants. But, my friend, the more the better. We should glory in our wants. They make us rich: for we can want nothing but it is in Christ's fulness, and laid up there for us. This makes way for a constant intercourse between you and Christ, and keeps up a holy friendship in giving and receiving. By this means a sweet familiarity will be maintained, and a growing intimacy cherished. Christ

requires you would be free with him, and draw largely upon his bank. Every moment you want something. Christ says, "Here it is ; come to me for it : I can deny you nothing." O go to him at his bidding, and put honour upon his love. Your many, your great wants, will only give him an occasion to shew how much he loveth you. He has for you bowels of the tenderest compassion. He feels for you more than you can think. Blessed is that want, look at it by faith, and you will find it so, which brings you to Christ for a supply.

Do you want **TEMPORALS**—read my Grant, Matt. vi. 32;—or **SPIRITUALS**, trust my Promise, Eph. i. 3;—or **ETERNALS**, look at my Gift in Rom. vi. 23; and be assured I will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good. Stand upon this ground, and here survey your wants : be they what they will, trust Christ for a supply. Live like a Christian, by the faith of the Son of God, for temporals, spirituals, and eternal : this is living.

This is HOLY living; for you cannot be thus receiving every moment out of Christ's fulness, but you must feel some gratitude to your divine friend, and a growing willingness to be his debtor for grace, and to be one of his pensioners for glory. This is HIGH living. For then has the Holy Spirit magnified Jesus in you upon earth, when you make him ALL and in ALL; and then has he given you the certain earnest that he will bring you to heaven, where you will find Jesus ALL, and in ALL, for ever and ever.

This is a little touch of our new year's gift. Pray tell Miss W—r it's our standing dish for 1772: I wish her a good stomach to feast on it with us; it is food and physic: I know she likes it. I don't doubt but in a very short time she and I shall sit down at the King's own table, and feast with him, and on him, and bless him, as long as we have our being. Pray tell them at next door, CHRIST IS ALL. And tell my dear little vicar, to whom my heart is knit, to exalt Christ—Up with

But there is grace sufficient in Jesus ; I wish he may live on that, and do all in his parish in a settled dependance on the assistance of the great Head of the church.

My prayer is for the family of the B—s, that this may be a favourable providence for them all ; may the Miss M—s enjoy present and eternal salvation by means of it. But why do I leave out Mr. I— ? Why, indeed ? May his heart leap for joy at the good news out of Mr. B—'s mouth, and children yet unborn bless God for this happy event !

My dear Miss W—r will be among the foremost. O let him have his glory ! pray, let there be a public thanksgiving. If I was at K—, I would preach on the occasion, and recommend praise to a prayer-answering God. I wish you a warm Christmas, and warm hearts ; I am sure they ought to be so ; and may you and your's rejoice in the glad tidings of the birth of our dearest Immanuel ! Continue your prayers for your servant in Jesus.

The Lord keep Mr. —, and be his
 Jesus in the evening of his life, and his
 strength in age, and his comfort in weak-
 ness. So prays

W. R.

him, Mr. B——; come, try; up with him a little higher. Pray, and preach, and live, that Christ be exalted. God bless the lifting up of Christ in K—— pulpit! Amen.

There is nothing I wish myself of good but I wish it to Mr. M——. I really love my K—— friends, and often think of that precious child. O Lord, keep him! Jesus, save him! may death never part mother and son. I wish my prayers may be heard for him. His portion with us is worth a thousand K——s. May he find with us Christ his ALL.

W. R.

LETTER XLII.

Blackfriars, May 6, 1772.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

INDEED you serve me right : it is good to settle an even account with me. I was so many months in writing ; so will you be to a day. This is rather a too hard and strict way of learning me to write oftener. I could have wished you to write again and again, and to set me an example of what I ought to do. But I submit to your judgement, and stand corrected in your way.

Hearing of Mr. I—n's coming to town, I did think of some little note : such as, "we are much hurried ; time taken up greatly ; so many interruptions, that, when I have proposed to sit down to ask my good friend how he does, I am called away."

Nothing came, however; I am resolved to grow better. My acquaintance are still much upon my mind and heart. Distance of time and place have made no change. I love them in the Lord, and for the Lord's sake. O he is kind to you. How many singular blessings have you! how highly favoured in *temporals*! Try to number them, if you can. How most highly favoured in *spirituals*, which are inestimable and eternal blessings! I feel thankfulness for you, and pray for the continuance of all your mercies, with a growing sense of your unworthiness of the least of them. Mr. I—n presses me much to say that I will come into the north this summer; but I cannot answer him directly. If I do, it will not be without spending some time at your house. He gives me a good account of Miss W—r, to whom I desire to be remembered, with my best wishes. All manner of blessings rest upon Mr. M—: may the Lord take that Isaac of your's in his arms, and lay his hands on him and bless him. Good success to my

friend the vicar; tell him the king has appointed Mr. I. S. a prebendary of W—r. The hearts of kings are in the hands of our Jesus: if he be our's, he will make all things our's. Remember in your prayers a friend to you and K—,

W. R.

LETTER XLIII.

November 23, 1773.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As I have not been permitted to talk to you face to face this summer, why should not I converse with you in another way? I think it right to tell you my present feelings, and how I stand affected towards you. I believe that all the true love in the world comes from the infinite fulness of Jesus. It has no other source: and he has (eternal blessings on him!) warmed my cold heart with some of his precious love. I feel a ray of it drawing my affections to my dear friend. Its sweet influence is from above: its origin is divine: it is, indeed, of heavenly extraction and birth. No thanks to me that it partakes of some of the gracious properties of the

fountain from whence it springs ; for some of them it has, my conscience bearing me witness. And these, I confess, are not natives of mine own soil: not being planted in it, am I able to make them grow and flourish? O no! The God of all grace is the free giver; he is the mighty continuer: without him they would have never been; without him they would have died at their birth, and gone out like a spark in the ocean. But I do really find some of the image and likeness of my loving Lord upon my heart, and that towards you. There can be no true friendship without an union of spirit. In order to be pure and stedfast, it must be refined from selfish views and carnal motives: it must spring from no outward attachment, but from a real agreement and harmony of soul: such is the nature of Christian friendship. It is beyond all Plato's rules, and Seneca's morals. They had no idea of it. Reason the most refined could never understand our doctrine. He that is joined to the Lord is ONE spirit; a most

wonderful union ; big with blessings, temporal and eternal. Among its temporal blessings, it is not the least that he reforms the heart, and makes it loving, like his own ; capable of receiving its heavenly friendship, and capable of shewing it to his praise, by especial love to his brethren and our brethren.

In whatever view I am considering our divine Friend, there is always something which gives him, and most justly, the pre-eminence. He is, and will be for ever, the most blessed head, which communicates life, and breath, and all things, to every member. In the character now before us, O how exalted, how glorious is he ! Yes, he is beyond all blessing and praise, for being a present Saviour to his people ; as he mightily delivers them from the tyranny of their vile tempers, and renders them happy in one another. It is from his grace that they put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, &c. He plants those virtues in

the heart ; he waters them with the rain of heaven ; he shines upon them ; and he makes them flourish in spite of all the opposition of selfish passions and inbred lusts ; indeed he does. There are persons in the world who are infinitely indebted to Jesus Christ for that brotherly love which is the bond of perfectness, and who, in some measure, walk in love, according to his teaching. But they mourn, I know they do, because they find so little gratitude to him, and so little conformity to his example. Yet some likeness there is, and they are striving every day for more, still setting out afresh : not content with any past attainment, they study both to love him more, and to draw more virtue from him, that they may love others, as Christ also loved them.

Methinks I see one of his disciples warm and eager in this pursuit. I stop him, and ask, Sir, upon what principle is it that your heart is so set upon being like Christ ? you are quite unwearied in having your own hateful tempers subdued, and in

putting on the sweet dispositions of the meek and lowly Jesus.

His answer, I am sure, would be—"The love of Christ constraineth me: O how I feel the blessed effect of being one with my Lord!—He has taught me in my very heart to love God, and man for God's sake: to this dearest Jesus I am indebted for my paradise restored; and I am never happier than when I am sensible of my vast debt; for then I love him best, and am most enabled to manifest it to men. Beyond description, beyond conception of any, yea, all the glorified saints, is the love of Immanuel to my soul: it is like himself, infinite and boundless; it is quite free, given to the unworthiest, and to the most unthankful: a perfect love, nothing but love, such as excludes all shyness and coldness, prevents misconstructions and quarrels, yea, removes the very cause and ground of them. A communicative love, most generously bestowing a right and title to all blessings upon the beloved; for thus the grant of the great charter runs:

ALL mine are thine—and, to crown the whole, it is a lasting love; yea, everlasting, reaching from eternity to eternity. The more I study and experience of this heavenly love, the more I find my heart affected with it, and the more I wish that all my friendships may reflect some image of, and bring some glory to, the friendship of my Jesus."

Having read this passage over carefully, I can, if called upon, set my hand and seal to it. All this I know to be true.

W. R. Some little spark of this holy flame (but, though little, inestimable) has long ago thawed my frozen heart, and has kept a warmth of affection in it which he that kindled often hears of in prayer and praise for you, and of which they who know you, and come in my way, hear also. Some kind providence will, I doubt not, ere long, let you hear it with your own ears. With pleasing hope I look forward to a present, because I am sure of a future, meeting which will never end. Our friendship will run coeval with our

being; it is an union formed by the divine hand of Jesus, who has won our hearts, and made them one in himself, in a bond which he will not, and none else can, break: so that we may sing, in humble confidence, all our way to Sion,

The love divine
That made us thine,
Shall keep us thine for ever.

Tell Mr. B—— he is in my debt, and I wish him to get out of it; but he must pray a good deal for me before he does; so must you. Pray the more for me. Ply the throne. Mrs. Romaine joins in all.

LETTER XLIV.

GRACE and peace be abundantly multiplied to my dear friend from the Lord Christ; may all whom she loves partake of his love! I have been kept from writing to you, and acknowledging your many favours to me and mine, by my Master's business. As soon as I came home, I was invited to preach in Buckinghamshire, where we have had the Lord with us of a truth. Oh, what am I, that mine eyes should see such things as I see! I, who am the veriest filthy dunghill-sinner that ever God suffered to live; that I, even I, should partake of his grace, as well as preach it; oh, it is astonishing! Surely, if ever I get to heaven (and I must not doubt of getting thither), I shall beat Mary Magdalen, and Paul, and Peter, and Manasseh, all to nothing. They had not

half to pardon that I have ; and yet, glory, glory, glory be to Jesus, I am among his pardoned ONES. Who, then, shall sing his praises in such an high note as I can? None, no not one of them all. I am the most indebted to free grace of all that ever were saved out of hell. May my experience tend to the strengthening of your faith!

Dear Madam, you almost overcome me with kindness. I shall be afraid to call and see you, lest you make me proud: for what have I good in me? Nothing. What good do I? None at all. Whatever good is in man, whatever good is done upon earth, the Lord doeth it himself. Down, then, with man: lay low his lofty looks, and up with Christ. Exalt him; too high we cannot raise *him*, too low we cannot humble the *sinner*. I would have you, therefore, not to look at me, but at my precious, dear Master: look unto him, and you shall be saved. Look unto me for any thing, and you shall infallibly be disappointed.

Present my hearty love in the bowels of Christ Jesus to your sister W——r. I find great fellowship with her, as a member of the same body, and actuated by the same spirit: and tell her from me, *that she cannot make too much use of Christ.* The more she uses him in all things, the happier will she be. To this I can set my seal. *Probatum est.*

I fail not to remember Mr. M—, when I am near, and have freedom with my precious Master. May you never want his presence! My wife joins in thanks, and is, with me, your's in the Lord Jesus,

W. R.

LETTER XLV.

October 28, 1775.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

HAVING an opportunity of sending my hearty love to you by Mr. I—n, I could not avoid embracing it. You are often on my mind and in my prayers. Really, my dear Madam, you are one of them by whom I find the truth of what I believe concerning the communion of saints. I experience it in its comfort; for I feel with you, rejoicing in your joys, and taking part in your sorrows. I have a good account of your health, a great blessing (may it continue!); and of your spiritual health, which is a greater: may that increase! and it will, as you live more *in, on, and to* Christ Jesus; coming daily as a poor sinner to live on a

rich Saviour. This is the great secret of the gospel. Nothing should keep you from Christ. However you feel, whatever you have done, at all times, in all places and frames, go to Jesus. I have been at this lesson a great while, and though very dull and stupid, yet, through marvellous grace, I have learned something. When things go well, we are apt to rest in them: I do not; my Jesus makes them well; I thank him, and rest in him, and not in his gifts: I enjoy him in them; and when things go badly, inward or outward, I would not stay from him to complain or murmur one moment, but, rejecting myself entirely, take him for my whole complete happiness. Let things go as they will, I look at Jesus through them, and would make use of them to lead me to live more upon him. This seems easy; but try it. I wish you a better scholar at it than I am. I hear you had a warning to be ready at the next door. I pray for its good effect. When the messenger comes, may every M—— lift up his and her head with joy!

I grow old, and find marks of the tabernacle's wearing out fast; but I know in whom I have believed. To him I commend you and your's. Mrs. R. joins in every good wish to all your's and you. Do not fail to pray for

W. R.

LETTER XLVI.

Blackfriars, June 24, 1777.

MY VERY GOOD FRIEND,

OUR journey is settled for Thursday morning next; we move slowly. Hope to be with you on Saturday, perhaps to dinner. Will you desire Mr. B— to give me leave to speak to his people, Sunday morning? I shall take it as a favour. I have seen poor D——: he is a very great penitent. The Lord has brought him through the fire; a miracle of mercy. Before this reach you, it's likely he will be adoring the love of a triune God. My journey has been with much prayer. He that makes men to be of one mind in an house, will, I hope, unite us to himself by his loving Spirit, and render us useful to each other, as iron sharpeneth iron. I do not,

I cannot, forget your family, Mr. M——,
and your beloved Isaac: I often have
them on my mind. I am, with great res-
pect in our common Lord, your's,

W. R.

LETTER XLVII.

Aug. 2, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WE remembered you and your's very particularly on the 7th of May last. Blessings on the birth of that day! I know more about it in 79 than I did before, and more reason to honour and esteem you. I send you enclosed a little token of respect. You had it in the last war, and it is now again expedient, yea, necessary. I hope for your helping hand in this good work. Some must fight, and others must pray. One is as much wanted as the other. If Moses does not pray, Joshua does not conquer. Prayers gained the victory. Asa has a great army of one million, one hundred thousand good soldiers; but he does not trust so much to

them, nor conquer so much by them, as by his prayers. Jehosaphat's prayer of faith vanquished a vast host without fighting. Read 1 Chron. v. from the 18th to the 23d verse. On this account I beg of you, my dear friend, to join us. You have some praying people at K——; call upon them to unite on this occasion. Remember, *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, James v. To-day it will avail as much as it did in the time of Elias. May God give you the Spirit of prayer, that you may join the goodly company throughout the land, who will be on their knees next Sunday at eight o'clock! It is your duty. May you esteem it your privilege! and I wish you growing communication with your God; more delight daily in approaching the throne of his grace, and more blessings coming from him on you and yours. We have already many hands lifted up to engage the Lord of Hosts on our side. Mine are engaged, and I trust will not hang down till peace return.

Mrs. Romaine is with me, and well.
 With her and my best wishes, I am, in
 our dear Lord, your friend and obliged
 servant,

W. R.

LETTER XLVIII.

Blackfriars, Nov. 30, 1779.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I HAVE been taught to weep with them that weep. They cannot but feel with and for one another who are joined to the Lord in one Spirit. That you suffer *seems* grievous to the flesh. I sympathize with you; but I also find the Lord is with you, supports you, yea, he comforts you; therein I do rejoice. My prayer is for much patience under his hand, and much profit from his rod. Let me direct your attention to Hebrews xii. from the 5th verse to the 14th. The whole matter turns upon the character of the Person who afflicts. Is it in wrath, or in love? Does he punish as a judge, or correct as a father? Mind how the sentence begins—*My son:*—keep

this upon your heart. You have fled to Jesus, you have taken the benefit of his atonement and of his righteousness; you are therefore the *adopted* child of the most high God. And you must not think he changes his love when he changes his dispensations. He is *always* your Father. And say, his rod is for the present not joyous, but grievous; yet mind ver. 11, it only *seemeth*; the flesh seems to be hurt, but really it is not; it is only in appearance. Look nearer; you may easily see love sending, love inflicting; and wait a little, you will have reason to thank your Father for the blessed fruits of his love. If you live, you will find them very rich and ripe. If he spare life, my first journey shall be to K——. I have great fellowship with the afflicted. I shall hope and pray for your support and comforts; my God has promised both. May they be abundant! This summer has given me great occasion to learn the same lesson with you; and I can set to my seal, that God is good, and doeth good, nothing but good, to his chil-

dren. To his tender care I commend you and your's. Look above, live above, both your joys and sorrows; make Jesus, at least you wish to make Jesus, your *all*. I shall be thankful for a line when convenient, to tell me more of his dealings with you; and am, in him, your faithful dear friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER XLIX.

Saturday, March 29.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I HAVE an opportunity of sending my respects to you by Mr. I——n; but I chose to give them to you under mine own hand. Although I do not see you, yet you have a place in my heart, and in and for the Lord's sake, who changeth not. I remember K—— in my best times, you and your's. One proof of it I hope to give this summer, if I am spared. Age is coming on fast. Infirmities many and great: travelling is a burden. But before I go hence, I purpose once more to visit my Y——re friends: I feel towards them some of that grace mentioned Rom. i. 11, 12, which grows by giving and receiving; as, indeed, all the gifts of Christ do: the more you use, the

more you have: you become richer for what you lay out. Such a wonderful fullness flows from Christ, that he who spends most for him, gets most from him. O that my journey may be of this kind; to your profit and mine, and to Christ's glory! I know not what time it will be; but will not wait on you without first acquainting you, and knowing what time will be to you the most agreeable.

Your dear boy is often on my mind. I am sure you do not wish him better than I do. All my advice is turned into prayer. You will give my love to Mr. B——y, of whom I hear good things. Mrs. R. desires her kind love to you and family. We had yesterday such a solemn time as I never expected to see in London: it was very truly a *Good Friday*. My hopes revive for this guilty land; For them that honour me, says God, I will honour. I am sure he was honoured yesterday. Let me, my good friend, not in compliment I ask, be remembered by you in prayer. My time is short. Pray that I may be

kept humble and thankful. I am with
true Christian affection, in and for my dear
Lord's sake, your friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER L.

November 16, 1780.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WAVE after wave—trouble after trouble—no ceasing till we get into the haven. I do not wish you out of them, but to profit by them. The furnace is to refine gold; so faith, proved, improved, yea, perfected by trials. Mind what the great Refiner says: “I will bring the third part through the fire; and I will refine them as silver is refined, and I will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.” O blessed furnace!—What! is this the effect of being put into it? Does the Son of God appear for and with his suffering members?—Does he keep off the

evil of suffering—give patience under it, profit from it—deaden the life of sense—quicken the life of faith—and thus bring more real good to his people from their trials, than from all the comforts that ever they had? Say—It is great, an uncommon great trial: the furnace is heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. Still, this is not to destroy faith, but to refine and exalt it. The plain lesson from hence to be learnt is, we must now trust more to the Lord, and less to self. His strength must be our safety, and not our weakness. His blessings must be our happiness. I write these things, because I am praying for them. It is not so much advice, as prayer. I know my Lord *can*, I believe my Lord *will*, help you in this time of need. Whatever interest I have with him is your's. None feel for you, or can, more than I do.

I am thankful, however, for the grace of God given unto you at this trying time. The furnace is intended, in the Father's hand, to prove faith, and to improve it.

He puts it into the fire like gold, that upon trial it may appear sterling; and that, losing nothing but dross, we may learn to trust him better. You now see and know that his trials of faith are acts of love. The burning bush, so far from being consumed in the flames, is cherished by them, and grows. Blessed be the name of our God! I find the miracle repeated in our visitations. In faith and patience you possess your soul; yea, the smell of fire does not pass upon you. Where could you have learnt what God has been teaching you so soon, or so well? All is well. May you see more of his love in every dispensation! Trust him. Go on trusting, without doubt or wavering, and he will grant you your heart's desire. I commend myself very earnestly to your remembrance in the best place. Mention me to your divine and almighty Friend, in whom I am, with my very best wishes, your friend and servant,

W. R.

P. S. Our text to-morrow is—*We are the true circumcision, &c.* Phil. iii. 3. God fulfil it, and give us this communion with the Trinity!

LETTER LI.

May 16, 1782.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I COULD not neglect this opportunity of assuring you how much I remember you in the best place. Our Lord knows the *needs must* of suffering. He loves you too well to deprive you of your portion. He himself went, and *all* his go, the same way to glory. They drink of the brook in the way; and they drink it out of the cup of salvation. True, it is bitter. I find it very bitter; as unpalatable as you can find it. But I am praying it may prove more salutary to you and to me; and this it cannot do while we murmur and complain. It is sent to stop this working of self-will. The flesh is impatient, and frets: the spirit stops its rebellion, and says, Not my will,

Lord, but thine be done. Amen! May this be the end of all your trials! May you come out of them like gold out of the fire!

I hear you have a present exercise; viz. your young and beloved Isaac to be parted from you. There is grace sufficient even for this. You do not love your son more than I did mine. It cannot cross your will more than it did mine: but my son went into the army, and I do not repent; it was his choice. He has been kept, as far as I know, from army-sins; and the same good God may also keep your son. Trust him in his loving and careful guidance; and the Lord will do what is best both for him and for you.

— Your one business is to trust your *all* in the hands of Christ; having received him, then to live upon him. Remember, he is to answer *every* purpose, body and soul; you and your's; earth and heaven. You are not living up to your privilege, if there be any person or thing that you keep back from Christ, and do not leave

to his absolute management. The command runs,—“Trust in *him*, at all times, ye people.” Pray him to make you willing to part with your son, as he did Abraham. Pray him to give you more faith to trust him in the Lord’s hand: and then follow him with your daily prayers that the good Lord may keep him from all evil. When you have done this, the rest must be left. The Lord will do what seemeth him good: yea, he will enable you to say, Come what may, *all* is well.

In a bond never to be broken, I am your’s in Christ. My blessing on your dear son, and prayers for him!

W. R.

TO A FRIEND.

On Humility.

Extracted from "Brown's (of Whitburne) Collection of Letters."

I HAVE ever had such awful apprehensions of the charge of souls, that I durst not (though often solicited) undertake it, ever since I knew my own heart. I have found myself plagued to death with watching over it: what must it be to watch over two or three thousand! who is sufficient for this? I feel myself as unfit for it as to have the government of the world upon my shoulders; but being appointed to this church, not only without my seeking, but also against my will, and having an undoubted call from God, therefore my sufficiency for the work being of God, I dare not stand out. I have been forced to say, 'Here am I, send me!' And though he has enabled me to depend upon him for grace to do his will, both in me and by

me, yet I find the flesh resisting, and putting forth a multitude of doubts and fears, in order to discourage me; besides this, I have an enemy whom I do not wish to make my friend, and who hates me with a perfect hatred; but I make the Lord my strength, and go to battle in the power of his might; I am sure all will be well while I am kept humble. O pray that I may be a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ! but above all, ask for me humility. A humble man can come to no harm; he will be ever trusting in the Lord, because he finds nothing in himself to trust in, while he gives great glory to God by trusting much in him. God gives him great grace, and this grace is to keep alive an abiding sense of what he is in himself; to shew him his ignorance and helplessness, to open to him daily more of the mystery of iniquity, to discover to him the stirrings of corruption, which others feel not, and make him sensible of these, even in duties and ordinances, that he may loathe himself and his very best works. These are the

fruits of true grace ; and he that is under the teachings of the Holy Ghost will abound in them. The more God does in the heart, the more he humbles it. The great design of his grace is to bring the proud sinner low, and then to keep him low. When he hath brought us low, we do not like to be kept there, we want to get up again ; our foolish desire is, that he may do something in us, for which we may have a good opinion of ourselves ; and so with this thought we are apt to wish, Oh that I were more holy ! Oh that I could pray better ! Oh that I was more spiritual in duties ! Oh that I was thankful enough ! If you could come to the true nature of these wishes, (specious as they appear), you would find them spring from the secret workings of a proud, self-righteous spirit ; take off their cloak of holiness, and their meaning is this, “ I wish God would give me something for which I might be pleased with myself.” If this was the case, would not the eye be turned inward upon this *very good self*, and

be drawn off from looking unto Jesus? and so far as self is made something, Christ is made nothing. You may depend upon this as one of the surest axioms of divinity: "Whatsoever it be that makes you pleased with yourself, that is not true grace; and whatsoever makes you displeased with yourself, is not true grace, unless it bring you humble to Christ, and make you put more trust in him." The Lord teach you these things practically! I have learned them by long experience. Though I know but little, yet I am getting on in Christ's school, and hope soon to be in the lowest form, for there we learn most and fastest; we there depend entirely on the teaching of our divine Master, who reveals his secrets to none but babes. A new-born babe absolutely depends on the care of its parents, so must we depend on God, on Christ our prophet and teacher; and when we are brought thus humble, he will then make known to us what he hides from the wise and prudent. I would therefore wish you the humblest man upon

earth ; then not only you may know most, but love most. He that feels his sins and miseries, his vileness and unprofitableness, with the deepest loathings of them, is in the fittest way to love Christ. If he is an experienced believer, the feelings of these sins and miseries will make Christ more precious ; the more he finds of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the more he will trust in Christ's righteousness ; and the more misery he knows, the more he desires salvation ; all will make Jesus more dear and lovely. His own vileness sets forth Christ's grace ; his unworthiness the worthiness of the Lamb, the sufficiency of Jesus, who is *all in all*. When you are going to measure Christ's high grace, do not get upon a mountain, but go down into a valley,—lower still, to the belly of hell, from whence Jonah cried ; from thence see the height of Jesus' grace, and from thence see how lovely he is. When the Spirit of Jesus is humbling you, shewing you your deceitful wicked heart, laying open your ruined nature in all its abominable work-

ings,—has not this often discouraged you, my friend, and instead of loving Christ more, and trusting him more, did it not weaken your trust, and lessen your love? and therefore you counteracted the gracious purposes of Jesus Christ. May he teach you better! that every future sense of sin may greatly endear that Lamb of God to you, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Depend upon it, that is the only true humbling for sin, which makes his blood more precious. Be faithful to your own heart; stop here a moment; look back and read what, from one thing to another, I have written to you, and examine, if you do not begin to fear for the interest of duty and holy obedience.—If the more I feel sin, I may trust the more, and love Christ the more, what place is left for obeying?—Is that your thought? to which I answer, The humblest man not only knows most, and loves most, but also obeys most. Is not grace the principle of gospel-obedience? and does not God give grace to the humble? grace to

do all things, grace to suffer all things? What says he who was less than the least in his own eyes? Oh! "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me!" The humblest lean most on Christ's strength; and therefore, through that strength, which is almighty, he can do most; he is helped best, fights most courageously, conquers most triumphantly. Shew me a seemingly humble man, who does not love duty, and I will shew you his pride; but let me see a truly humble man, and I am sure to find him walking humbly with his God. He walks with God, and God walks with him. Hear how he declares who are his favourites! not the rich, not the learned, not the Pharisee, not the great and noble; no, but "to this man will I look, who is of an humble and contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word." These he honours, they are in his sight of great price; how exalted in his esteem, who is the Fountain of all true honour! and he will exalt them very high. He that humbleth himself

shall be exalted to the throne above, where all God's children are perfectly humble, crying with one voice, "Not worthy we, but worthy is the Lamb!" If there be so great grace, O pray to God to make me more and more humble. I will do the same for you, and remain your's,

W. R.

THE END.

...to the throne above
...children are perfectly
...with me voice, "Not
...the Lamb?" If
...O pray to God to
...I will
...and remain your

W. R.

THE END.

Romaine, William,

Letters from the late W. Romaine to a friend on the most important
subjects during a correspondence of twenty years

London 1822

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